MAN AND THE COSMOS

The Vision of St Maximus the Confessor

by
LARS THUNBERG

with a Foreword
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Foreword

St Maximus the Confessor is without question one of the greatest Fathers of the Eastern Church. Indeed he is one of the outstanding Christian thinkers of all time. Until recently however his thought has been very little known in Western Europe and North America. Only in the last thirty or forty years has he been more widely studied, particularly in France and Germany. The publication of this present book marks something of a breakthrough for Maximian studies in the English-speaking world.

Dr. Lars Thunberg's massive study of St Maximus's doctrine of man, *Microcosm and Mediator* was published in 1965. It at once established the writer as one of the outstanding authorities in this field. Now twenty years later he gives us a general overview of St Maximus' vision of man and cosmos, and sets out for us the principle dimensions of his theology. Lars Thunberg is well known in his own country not only as a theologian and a worker for Christian unity, but also as a poet of distinction. He is one who knows about the subtlety and clarity needed for the accurate use of words.

Such qualities are very necessary for anyone who will write about St Maximus. The Confessor uses words with the greatest precision. At times his style seems highly technical, almost esoteric. This is one of the reasons why his work is often difficult of access. But this difficulty arises not from confusion but from his desire to do justice both to the unity and diversity of things, to be true to the many-faceted quality of the mystery of God which he perceives in man, in the universe, in the Scriptures and above all in God's revelation of Himself made in Jesus Christ.

Indeed the whole of St Maximus' theology can be under-

stood as a great hymn to the unity of all things, brought about through the creative and redemptive love of God: the unity of man with God and of God with man, the unity of all creation in man when he fulfills his calling to be at once microcosm and mediator, that is, the one in whom all things created are lifted up to God from whom they came. For St Maximus this is a unity in which nothing of the infinitely rich diversification of the universe is lost; all things become their true self as all are gathered up into one single complex act of adoration.

For Maximus the center and key to the whole of this process is to be found in the person and work of Jesus Christ Himself. This is why the Chalcedonian definition of the union of God and man in the person of Christ, a union without confusion, a distinction without separation, is vital for him. This is why the monothelite controversy, the argument that Christ had only one will, that the human will was swallowed up and lost in the divine will, was something on which he could not compromise. In coming into unity with God, the creation is not annihilated. "Nothing is lost, for all in love survive." Always the elements of unity and diversity, of the specific and the universal are held together in his thinking. Everywhere as the sundered fragments of the world come together, they are transcended yet preserved in a movement of growth and longing towards the end for which in the beginning they were created.

For Maximus none of this is purely abstract or theoretical. It is the person of the incarnate Word who is at the centre of all things. The incarnation of God and the corresponding deification of man, and in man of all creation, these are the focal points not only of his thought and his prayer, but also of his daily life, personal and social. For Maximus, God is constantly becoming man in man, so that man may no less constantly become God, through the grace and gift of God. Man's participation in goodness, at every level, is a participation in God Himself, who is the source of all goodness. All man's movements to realize the end for which he was created involve him ever more deeply in participation in the divine life which comes into the world and then returns to the source from

which it comes. It is in going beyond himself into God, that man becomes most truly human, "whence appears," as St Maximus puts it, "the power of this reciprocal gift which deifies man for God through the love of God, and makes God man for man through His love for man, making through this whole exchange God to become man for the deification of man, and man to become God for the hominization of God. For the Word of God who is God wills always and in all things to work the mystery of his embodiment."

As Lars Thunberg points out in this study, St Maximus was a man who lived between Christian East and West, as familiar with Rome as he was with Constantinople. He suffered in his own body the tensions already developing between those two worlds, and he died for the integrity of his vision of the bringing together of all things in Christ. He is a theologian whose work has not yet been fully appreciated, but whose theology has surprising and unexpected points of relevance for our own day. It is fitting that this book published by an Orthodox publishing house and written by a Lutheran scholar, should have a forword written by an Anglican. In the man to whom it is dedicated we have one who in his thought and in his life witnessed to the utmost to the reality of the unifying, reconciling power of the divine love. May his message be heeded by Christians of our own troubled, late twentieth century.

A. M. Allchin

CHAPTER 1

Maximus the Confessor in His Own Time: A Biographical Introduction

Maximus the Confessor is undoubtedly one of the most outstanding expositors of Christian thought in the history of the Church. As a theologian, a devout monk, and a spiritual adviser, he has a legitimate claim to be understood in his historical context. Underlining his "timeless" theological validity would do him no favor, because his historical conditions are part of his genuine creativity. He is a representative of the not-yet-divided Church, and as such he is a link between the Christian East and the Christian West. But this fact does not authorize his readers to neglect the particular historical conditions in which he lived and worked. It is precisely when we see him against the background of his own time that we recognize him as a theological genius for all time.

The obvious conclusion is that we must try to understand his ecclesiastical role (enigmatic as it may be) and his theological contribution to Christian thinking, both in context. This means, too, that we must work with his texts just as they are, and only secondarily make use of them in a wider setting. And it means that whatever we may find in his formulations and positions that is hard or difficult to understand will only increase our efforts to capture the validity of his contribution. Reading the Fathers, we can never merely copy or repristinate them; we have to live with them in constant dialogue—learning, reacting, and sharing their wisdom in our hearts.

I propose, therefore, that we not only try to grasp the unity total of Maximus's thinking, but also that we be open to his texts and let them—and his thinking in general—speak to us in our own situation, as an ecumenical situation, since he himself was, and now too remains, an ecumenical figure.

In many ways, Maximus's theology covers the whole range of classical theological topics. Since, however, there has been a certain tendency in the past to restrict his relevance to special aspects of christology, we shall try to let the dimensions of his theology illuminate as many as possible of the classical subjects of theological reflection.

Maximus's texts are not always easy to understand, even for Greeks. But this does not give us any excuse for not taking his writings seriously. In some respects his terminology is somewhat scholastic, but, being an Easterner, his intimacy was never scholastic in any negative sense. He wanted to be precise, and he wanted to bring light to the complexity of the issues he was dealing with.

THE HISTORICAL SETTING OF MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR

Emperor Justinian (482-565) and Empress Theodora had ambitions to restore the great Roman Empire to its old glory under the scepter of the Christian Caesar of Constantinople, and to reestablish the peace and unity of the Church. Their ambitions and their successes (even if not permanent) formed the image of responsible imperial policy that the emperor at the time of Maximus still tried to maintain. But during the whole lifetime of Maximus, the empire found itself threatened.

The threats of disintegration—and here we must not forget that every form of disintegration was perceived as being contrary to the ideology of the Christian Empire—were of an external as well as an internal character. In relation to the world outside, the power of Byzantium was threatened by the empire of the Persians and, in addition, by the dynasty of the Sassanids, who were inspired by the anti-Christian poets

of the Zoroastrians. In 615 they advanced as far as the Asian shore of the Bosporus. In the interior, two factors radically threatened the peace of the empire. First was the almost canonical tension between the ecclesiastical center of Rome and the ecclesio-political center of Constantinople. This tension, for the first time since the victory of Christianity in the Roman Empire, was developed further, with the active aid of Maximus himself, into a conflict between Church and State, and was seen as such by the representatives of the Church, particularly in Rome. Second, there was the tension that had developed after the Council of Chalcedon in 451, the split between the Chalcedonians and the non-Chalcedonians. Some of the non-Chalcedonians were Nestorians (the followers of Nestorius) whose christology supposedly had difficulties in keeping the two sides of Christ together. They were condemned at the Council of Constantinople in 553 in an effort to reconcile the other non-Chalcedonians, i.e. the Monophysites (who taught that there was only one nature in Christ), and again later when those Monophysites found themselves nevertheless in opposition to imperial policy. Still later this hostility was fully manifested when the Moslems—who became the even more victorious successors of the Persians as Byzantium's external enemy—were in fact hailed as liberators by the Monophysites. All these events took place within the lifetime of Maximus. Syria, Mesopotamia, Palestine, Persia, Egypt, and even the whole of Northern Africa were conquered by the Moslems during the period of his theological and ecclesiastical activity.

Here it is necessary to emphasize that the coincidence of the two conflicts, in spite of the fact that they were not identical in dogma or canonical rules, reinforced tensions between Church and State. In order to reconcile the Monophysites and preserve the internal peace of the empire, the emperors, supported by the patriarchs of the imperial city, often chose doctrinal positions that had to be rejected by the Orthodox, who were at that time supported by the pope. However, that very fact happened to bring together at least some Orthodox and non-Orthodox of the East. This had been a reality to some extent already in the reign of Justinian, but the tendency

became more manifest at the time of Maximus, particularly during the conflict over Monotheletism. Here, however, Maximus promoted Orthodoxy against the imperial forces supporting non-Orthodox positions. So Maximus, as a defender of Orthodoxy as he understood it in his faithfulness to Chalcedon, entered into conflict with the Imperial See. This conflict lasted till the end of his life and was supported by Rome, which also gave him spiritual support.

In the preface to his famous *Novella 6* the Emperor Justinian had written that the emperor should support the dignity of priesthood, and that priests should pray for the emperor. However, this balance in principle was never quite successful, since the concepts of peace held by the two partners were different: that of the emperor was one of political and diplomatic harmony, and that of the Church developed, thanks to the efforts of diverse confessors, into one of doctrinal unity. Consequently, the choice of the representatives of "priesthood" more and more became a choice between a non-theological personal political position on one side, the reward of which being the benevolence of the imperial power, and the more rigorous theological position of a confessor martyr on the other. A third position—of a more "ecumenical" theology in a modern sense—had become impossible, the rigorous Orthodox theology provided the only possibility, at the time, of saving for the future a truly ecumenical attitude.

Let us here recapitulate the most important events in the time of Maximus. The emperor of his youth was Heraclius, who might, politically, be characterized as the most impressive inheritor of Justinian's policy. He enjoyed considerable success in his war against the Persians. He rescued the capital and the whole empire, and at that time he also had considerable support from the populace. The famous Holy Cross, which had been discovered by Empress Helena in the Holy Land but had been removed from Jerusalem by the Persians, was reintroduced into the Holy City by Heraclius, an act of capital symbolic importance. But from Justinian, Heraclius also inherited the idea of theological reconciliation.

Supported by his patriarch Sergius, Heraclius favored a

theological compromise between the strictly Chalcedonian position and the Monophysite. The patriarch of Alexandria at the time, Cyrus, who was of the imperial viewpoint, agreed to attempt a union with the disciples of the Monophysite Severus, through a so-called *monoenergetic* formula, in which he appealed to a formulation by Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (an influential 5th century theologian of Neoplatonist tendency, whose writings appeared under the name and with the authority of the Pauline disciple Dionysius the Areopagite, known from Acts 17:34). In the formula was the *one theandric energy of Christ*.

This effort, however, was not successful, thanks to the opposition of a monk by the name of Sophronius, who had been appointed patriarch of Jerusalem (and who was a friend of Maximus). That being the situation, the patriarch Sergius agreed to pronounce a patriarchal judgment (*Psephos*) in 634, forbidding the mention of either one or two volitional principles of "operation" in Christ. Sophronius and Maximus both accepted this verdict. Sophronius, however, had to accept another situation as well: Omar the Caliph invaded Palestine and entered the capital Jerusalem. He was accompanied by the patriarch, who died shortly afterwards in 638, being spiritually exhausted.

In Constantinople the efforts to achieve theological reconciliation were now intensified. In 639, the Emperor Heraclius published a statement (an *Ecthesis*), which was, substantially, a reissue of the *Psephos* but with a clearer tendency to oppose the position which argued in favor of two wills in Christ. The conflict thus became more acute. In 641, the emperor was murdered and was succeeded by the Empress Martine, who in her very obvious efforts to favor the Monophysites relied on theological advice from Pyrrhus, the new patriarch of Constantinople. After the fall of Martine, Pyrrhus was exiled to North Africa. There, at Carthage in 645, he held his famous dispute with Maximus, where the latter succeeded in convincing him that there are after all two wills in Christ—one divine and one human—since the will is a matter of *nature* (and Christ is of two natures), and not of the *person*

(in the terms the Council of Chalcedon had used to define the unity of person, *hypostasis*, in Christ).

The position of Rome, which had been favorable to the *Psephos*, now also became more rigorous. Pyrrhus, who had been condemned by Pope John IV, traveled to Rome after his dispute with Maximus (who accompanied him), and there he officially rejected *Monotheletism* (the doctrine of one will in Christ) before Pope Theodore. But in Ravenna a short while later he returned to Monotheletism and was then strongly condemned by Theodore.

The policies of Constantinople, however, remained the same during the reign of the emperor Constans, who published in 647 a *Typos*, written by the new patriarch Paul II, which in fact promulgated the doctrine of one will. The reaction of Rome was very vigorous; it convened a council (the Lateran Council of 649), in which Maximus was very active, and which he himself considered to be the sixth Ecumenical Council. That council condemned Monotheletism and circulated this decision around the Christian world. The emperor could not do otherwise than arrest the pope—who was at that time Martin I—although he did not succeed in doing so until 653, when, for a year, Pyrrhus had already been reintroduced at Constantinople as the patriarch. Thus, the theological policy of the emperor, on the one side, and the papal theology, with its ecclesiastical-political implications on the other, became separated from one another without any possibility of reconciliation. The logical outcome would be the double martyrdom of Pope Martin and Maximus.

THE PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY OF MAXIMUS

So far we have only dealt with the personal biography of Maximus rather obliquely. This was done on purpose, since it would have been false to regard his biography only as a strictly personal one in the modern sense of the word. To a great extent Maximus acts and appears as a representative of his time: the only legitimate historical approach to his destiny is through the mirror of the political and theological

conflicts of his time. On the other hand, this does not mean that he was only a victim, a passive pawn in a game of chance. It is precisely against the background of the conflicts of his time that he himself appears in history as a personality basically motivated by his theological convictions. We must therefore try to sketch in a profile of his life according to its inner consistency.

The personal life of Maximus does reflect the ecclesiastical situation of his time. For him, as for that time, there was more and more clearly a choice between political compromise and martyrdom for the true faith and confession. Yet, to regard him primarily as a dogmatician and a polemical writer who served the ecclesiastical power interests of his time would be to interpret falsely the symbolic relevance of his life. It is in his capacity as a contemplative monk and a theological visionary that he assured himself a definite and authoritative place in the Christian conscience. It is indeed characteristic of his life that his enemies in ecclesiastical and political circles accused him of political crimes rather than heresies, since his spiritual theology, his monastic status, and his integrity as a thinker were so widely recognized that any accusation of heresy would have been ineffective and would have seemed simply ridiculous.

Our sources are the diverse *Acts* about him (we find them in Migne, *Patrologia Graeca*, vol. 90). There we notice, first of all, the *Relatio motionis* (the summary of his life development), written by his disciple Anastasius in 655, which presents the history of the first action against him by the imperial court. We also find there the *Vita et certamen* (his official biography) which, however, dates from a somewhat later period, itself relying on the *Acts*. Maximus's own letters (printed in vol. 91) are of course another primary source.

Maximus was born around 580, in a family of high reputation in the imperial capital, at a time when there was a relatively high degree of harmony in the empire that covered up the tensions and conflicts which were to come. He had an occasion to engage in serious general studies. All his works prove, in fact, the quality of his studies in rhetoric and philosophy. He probably devoted himself to studies until the

age of 21. He utilized his education so well that he drew the attention of the Emperor Heraclius, who invited him to become a kind of personal secretary of state. Probably in these circles he already had acquired Anastasius, who was the private secretary of the empress, as a kind of personal disciple.

He probably left the court in order to enter monastic life, even though he still maintained good relations with the court. We can deduce this from the many cordial letters to John the Chamberlain (the culminating point of this correspondence, spiritually, being the famous *Letter II* on charity). About 614 he entered the monastery of Philippicus at Chrysopolis, the Asian suburb of Constantinople. Later (perhaps in 615) he moved to the monastery of St. George at Cyzicus. We know for certain, however, that he had to leave Asia Minor on account of the Persian invasion in about 630. We find him again in Africa, i.e. at Carthage, in 632, after a voyage at sea when he probably visited not only Crete but also Cyprus.

At Carthage he entered the monastery of Eucratas as a monk. The abbot was the well-known Sophronius, who in 634 (as we have mentioned) became the patriarch of Jerusalem and the first great opponent of Monotheletism. It was in the capacity of a kind of disciple to Sophronius that Maximus entered this fight, as we have already indicated.

Certainly, it was monastic devotion and experience, far more than considerations of a political-ecclesiastical character, that turned Maximus into an outstanding theologian. Above all, he was a truth-seeking thinker of a speculative kind. During his first period of monastic life (a long period) he had access to, and assimilated, a monastic tradition of practical, ascetic, and contemplative wisdom. The influence of Evagrius, the Origenist, although Origenism had been officially condemned, was considerable in this tradition, and Maximus must have succeeded in integrating it into his own orthodoxy, while at the same time refuting Origenism as an ontological and philosophical system.

Maximus, in this process of integration, obviously used as counterpoints both the dialectical system of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (without identifying himself with it) and the spiritual theology of the Cappadocian Fathers (Gregory of

Nyssa and particularly Gregory of Nazianzus). As a matter of fact, Gregory of Nazianzus became in the process one of the most quoted authorities in his own theological work.

Many scholars have studied Maximus at just this point. Proposals have even been made that there was "an Origenist crisis" in his life, but Dom Polycarp Sherwood, the American Benedictine, has definitely shown that Maximus was able, during his first period as a monk in Asia Minor, to correct Origenism (in the first volume of his *Ambiguorum Liber*). In this respect Sherwood partly corrects the position of his famous colleague Hans Urs von Balthasar.

It may be added that more recently another Maximus scholar, Juan Miguel Garrigues, O.P., has formulated a supplementary opinion on the monastic influences on Maximus, showing how it was possible for him to take this firm stand against Origenism without making a complete rupture. Garrigues has formulated it in this way: "Origen as well as Evagrius and Gregory of Nyssa were, in our opinion, read by Maximus within a wider context of spiritual tradition. . . ."[1] As Garrigues indicates, this context was the so-called Macarian tradition.

The fight against Monotheletism turned out to be far more than a theoretical dispute about one or two wills in Christ. The consequences of the doctrine of the two natures, established by the Council of Chalcedon, was at stake. Maximus's involvement was one based on deep spiritual experience. His *dyothelite position* (i.e., his defense of the position that there must be a human as well as a divine will in Christ) was well prepared in advance. On his side, it was more his respect for the authority of the *Psephos* of Patriarch Sergius than his own deepest theological convictions that made him hesitate to enter actively into the struggle from the beginning. The doctrine of the two wills is in fact—as Garrigues has shown—first of all a logical consequence of the doctrine of the two natures, if we accept the presuppositions of its time. But for Maximus perhaps it turned out to be far more than that: it became a matter of accepting fully the humanity of Christ

[1] J. M. Garrigues, *Maxime le Confesseur. La charité—avenir divin de l'homme*, Paris 1976, p. 76.

as a prerequisite of our salvation.[3] It is precisely the active coexistence of the two natures—with their wills, according to their respective natures—which forms the mystery of salvation (the *soteriological* mystery) of, in, and through Christ.

Consequently, to deny the duality of wills in Christ equals, for Maximus a misunderstanding of the very core of Christ's salvific action. If no one spoke about "one single energy," as Cyrus did, there was perhaps no need to insist explicitly upon the duality of wills, but when that happened, it became inevitable to do so. Because of that, Maximus's own terminology in the field became more and more precise, for dogmatic clarity.

As I indicated above, the martyrdom of Maximus was a tragic affair. The imperial trial of Pope Martin took place in 654. The next year Martin was exiled to Cherson, where he died in September of the same year. At that time Maximus's own trial was finalized on the basis of his alleged unwillingness to communicate with the patriarchal throne of Constantinople, so he in turn was exiled to Bizya in Thrace. However, in 656, Peter, the new patriarch of Constantinople, sent a court bishop by the name of Theodosius to Bizya in an effort of reconciliation, but Maximus did not change his position. Once more he felt obliged to refuse obedience to the will of the emperor. This happened in the monastery of St. Theodore at Perberis, also in Thrace, where he lived for six years, always active through correspondence.

In 662, Maximus was brought to Constantinople, accompanied by Anastasius the Apocrisarios and Anastasius the Monk in order to be heard by a council, which was clearly Monothelite in tendency. This council condemned him and his disciples. Their right hands and their tongues were cut off, and they were sent farther away: to Lazica on the southeast short of the Black Sea. Here Maximus died in August of the same year. His cause, however, was to be victorious within a few years' time, at the Council of Constantinople in 680-681.

[3]This is pointed out in another French dissertation: F. M. Léthel, *Théologie de l'agonie du Christ. La liberté humaine du Fils de Dieu et son importance soteriologique mises en lumière par Saint Maxime Confesseur*, Paris, 1979.

MAXIMUS AS A PERSONALITY OF HIS TIME

What kind of a personality was Maximus? As I have indicated, I will try to present a preliminary evaluation on the basis of some specific attitudes and positions taken by Maximus. The first among them, a decisive choice on his part and of capital importance for the whole rest of his life, is his decision to join a monastic community.

His Conversion to Monastic Life and his Attitude as a Monk

The ancient biographer of Maximus maintains that it was the threatening Monothelite doctrine, so utterly dangerous for the Church, that caused Maximus to leave his comfortable life as a secretary at the imperial court. But this cannot be true. This is rather a proposition put forward by a hagiographer who wanted everything to suit a pattern laid out beforehand. In fact, the biographer indicates another, far more plausible reason for the move; Maximus was simply attracted to the peaceful life of a monastery, a life of "peace." The expression he uses here is *kath'hesychian*, which means "a life in peace." This does not mean that the expression used here must be interpreted in the manner of a later time, i.e. as a "hesychastic life." All the activities of Maximus during the years after his entrance into the monastery show that he became a monk out of an authentic zeal. He was energetically involved in the traditions of ascetic and contemplative life that were then current. The Evagrian tradition became very dear to him, in spite of its Origenist tendency (which he found means to refute), and he continued to use the wisdom of its experience. In particular it became clear to him that this tradition was valuable for the practical benefit of the monks.

In line with this influence, Maximus also adapted himself to the allegorizing tradition of the Alexandrine exegesis of Holy Scripture, a tradition which was inherited by the monasteries even though the monks were in general loyal to the

wider context of the Life of the Church Universal

a ly became obvious to him. When he wrote in his *Letter II* that ... especially as we have or y one single nature ... likewise only have one single mind and will with regard to ... not ... ourselves ... he could not have imagined that his statement would have been interpreted as implying a Monothelete christological position. He speaks here only about ... relation between man and God, and shows the unity of the will of all men on the basis of the common nature ... in the principle (*logos*) of our ... [illegible] ... establishes between a double relation ... [illegible] ... unity. The ... [illegible] ... human nature resulting itself ... [illegible] ... the double charity toward God ... [illegible] ... charity ... [illegible] ... the unity of Christ which ... [illegible] ... will ... [illegible] ... in fact the very ... [illegible] ... possible to refuse Christ the ... [illegible]

Particularly it is when Maximus insisted on the fullness of its implications ... and her position than ... [illegible] ... Monothelete position, pretending ... [illegible] ... perfection of humanity consisted ... [illegible] ... of what is human into the ... divine rather than ... [illegible] ... that ... [illegible] ... that he became intensely polemical. In that ... he not only made certain things clear but he also fought vehemently against the anti-Chalcedonian heresy. The person fighting was still the monk who had already in his refutations of Origenism made crystal clear what he meant by Christian perfection: a life which consists in the total sanctification of all the possibilities inherent in human nature. His struggle and consequently the martyrdom which was its result was thus the logical consequence of his monastic theology.

His Evaluation of the Bishop of Rome as a Defender of the Doctrine of the Church

During the first legal process against him Maximus was asked why he loved the Romans and hated the Greeks. He answered: "We have not received the commandment to hate anyone. I love the Romans since we are of the same faith and the Greeks, because we have the same language."[4] Here Maximus clearly underlined that he shared a fellowship of faith with Rome that he did not have with the Greeks (i.e. Constantinople). Certainly, that might have been simply a statement of fact, but obviously the terms Greeks and Romans, as they are used here, cover a reality of theology. When the inquisitor mentioned the fact that the Romans were the enemies of imperial policy, he seemed to forget that the whole empire as such ought to have been made stand as Roman, as an inheritor of ancient Rome, and as a Christian empire. It was, in fact, he understood the distinction between an ecclesiastical community called "Roman," and another community (it may be political or cultural), called "Greek." Maximus, it seems, understood immediately the symbolism of that distinction, and accepted it as fact, expressing the rupture which had taken place between Church and State. Romans were all those who professed the same orthodox faith. He himself was "Greek" only because he spoke Greek. It is seemingly easy acceptance of the distinction by Maximus, however, has a deeper background which can be made clear by a second and third quotation.

In a somewhat fragmentary letter to Peter the Illustrious (from 643 or 644, which is preserved only in a Latin version) we find some explicit expressions of a very advanced theology about the position of the Bishop of Rome. Maximus simply identified the See of Rome with the Catholic Church, and he spoke of "the very holy Church of Rome, the apostolic see which God the Word Himself and likewise all the holy Synods, according to the holy canons and the sacred defini-

[4] *Patrologia Graeca*, 90, 128 C.

he attempted [illegible] point there. His [illegible] seems never to have been [illegible]; it was always presented as a personal, [illegible] (in the sense of universality [illegible]) [illegible] had [illegible] his very personal [illegible].

[illegible] through letters, was as [illegible] developed in those [illegible] questions about [illegible] personal salvation always occupied [illegible]. His letters were always so well prepared that [illegible] with profit by anyone. But this did not [illegible] pastoral [illegible] appeal.

[illegible] of addressing [illegible] was respectful [illegible] that was characteristic of the Byzantine culture [illegible] but one [illegible] an element of [illegible]. His exquisite politeness was well [illegible] rigorous demand [illegible] between theory and practice. This meant that [illegible] as the subject demanded [illegible] expressing what he understood to be the truth.

[illegible] his enemies is evident [illegible]. When he was asked whether the emperor would [illegible] to Rome in order to grant a proper conciliation, he answered in a manner that was [illegible] characteristic of him: "He will certainly do it if [illegible] to imitate God, to humiliate himself in front of Him for the sake of [illegible] salvation."[4]

[illegible] his attitude as a confessor. Polemics were [illegible] never [illegible] themselves; they served the cause of salvation. And [illegible] one has doctrinal [illegible] relations with people.

[illegible] style he was [illegible] but was [illegible] in all respects a [illegible] writer. Maximus knew [illegible] all the rhetorical [illegible] of his own [illegible] tradition, but he did not use them simply to make an impression upon his listeners or readers. His [illegible] was far too [illegible] for that sort of [illegible]. He was a deep admirer of Gregory of Nazianzus, the great Rhetor among the Fathers, but he did not fol-

[4] [illegible]

low him in his play on synonyms, rhetorical figures, etc. He [illegible] and for that reason he always looked for distinct formulations. His definitions and aphorisms are admirable. But he also knew the complexities of Christian theological reflection. He [illegible] his sentences like Chinese [illegible] opened slowly and with [illegible] attention to reach the precious final truth he wanted to communicate to his readers.

As a kind of summary and presentation of Maximus's style [illegible] is the Prologue to Maximus's Four Centuries on Charity (a collection of sentences written in the typical monastic style), which follows below. This is very characteristic of the kind of literature that was dear to Maximus and which he himself wanted to promote: Christian practical wisdom in a concentrated form.

> In addition to the discussion of the Ascetic Life [another of Maximus's most widely read monastic treatises], I have sent this one on charity to Your Reverence [illegible] arranged in four sets of a hundred according to the number of the Gospels. [illegible] does not [illegible] up to your expectation, still it does not fall short of my ability. Your Blessedness should be aware that these are not the work of my own thought; rather I went through the writings of the holy Fathers and selected whatever might turn the mind to [illegible] subject. I have recapitulated many things in a few lines [illegible] may be seen at a glance for ease [illegible]. These I send to Your Sanctity with the request that you read them with kindly [illegible] and [illegible] with profit [illegible] the [illegible] of the style and [illegible] that is [illegible] any spiritual profit.
>
> I urge you not to take what I have written as a [illegible] puzzle. I have merely fulfilled a command. I say this because today we are many who [illegible] in words, whereas those who give or receive instruction by deeds as well are few indeed. Rather,

give your best attention to each chapter. Not will they all, as I think, be readily understood by everybody; on the contrary, for a great number of them will require much scrutiny even though they seem to be simply expressed. Perhaps something useful for the soul will come to them, but this will wholly come from God's grace in one who reads with a simple mind, with love of God and with charity, but to him who takes up this or any other work whatsoever not for the sake of speculation, but out of reverence for phrases serving to evade the public, while setting up his own conceited self as wiser, there will never come any profit of any sort."[1]

[1] St. Maximus the Confessor, *The Ascetic Life, The Four Centuries on Charity*, Translation, Notes and Introduction by Polycarp Sherwood, O.S.B., S.T.D. (Westminster, Md., 1955), p. 51.

CHAPTER 2

The Trinitarian Dimension of Maximus's Theology

Maximus's theology constitutes a whole. In spite of all his movements and struggles, Maximus developed a very consistent system of theology. His theological *cosmos* could be understood in terms of the different *dimensions* that are relevant in the whole of his theological universe.

In this context the Trinitarian dimension is fundamental. His theology was not one of different entities, such as we know in Western medieval scholastic tradition. Maximus was aware of the dangers of fragmentation. His system of theology was in fact a spiritual vision of the *cosmos*, of human life within that *cosmos*, and therefore of *the economy of salvation*, the saving interplay between the human and the divine.

But it is also quite obvious that for Maximus the doctrine of the Holy Trinity is never an isolated theme within the context of his theology. It is precisely a *dimension* with repercussions and consequences all over the field. This can be so, however, only on account of the presuppositions underlying the data of his Trinitarian theology. Some of these he shares with all his predecessors, some others seem to be more his own.

According to Greek thinking in general, God in His essence is immobile. Consequently, motion must be due to an intrusion into the repose of the divine life. At this point, however, rest or repose remains for Maximus characteristic of the divine life, but rest may presuppose motion. God is not

[illegible] He cannot [illegible] had [illegible] sovereignty, but it is also an expression of His [illegible]

[illegible] that motion in God is only a [illegible] understanding of creation—and of salvation [illegible] motion toward that which is created [illegible] the Being who is perfect.

[illegible] revelation. Existence does not lack traces of God's [illegible] qualified as the One-in-Three and as engaging [illegible] mode of being as Trinity.

When we talk about the Trinity in Maximus, we are not addressing an isolated issue. Divine life is a life in Trinitarian

a trinity, the existential consequences of which [illegible] of life as it is given, in total dependence [illegible] *filioque*, i.e. dependence on His own [illegible] He has created [illegible] image.

TRINITARIAN [illegible] IN MAXIMUS'S OWN [illegible]

In a masterly study of [illegible] [illegible] at the [illegible] we know that the differences between the [illegible] [illegible] fact that Maximus recognizes that there is [illegible] pretation of the *filioque*, the Western [illegible] Father [illegible]

When [illegible] however [illegible] I add that behind [illegible] background.

[illegible] Meyendorff, Byzantine Theology, Fordham 1974, p. [illegible]

We find it first of all in the Cappadocian Fathers, who had made the necessary distinctions. For them the unique substance or Divinity without differences of ontological degree is to be found in the three *hypostases* (Persons) and these three hypostases possess the same divine substance. Thus, the consubstantiality of the Persons does not affect their personal life in the sense that the latter would become a necessity (the Persons are more than mere modalities of a common substance). But on the other side the hypostatic distinctions do not affect the ontological harmony between the Persons. There is a complete unity existing in three distinct Persons.

However the oneness of God is represented in a sovereign specific manner by the Person of the Father who remains the source of life for the other hypostases. For this reason, very often we find in the Cappadocians and their successors the close identification between the Father and Divinity. The other Persons are there because of the Father, the principle of their unity.

Yet we find in Maximus another influence on his Trinitarian theology. It may partly coincide with that of the Cappadocians but it does nevertheless certain particular elements. For the Cappadocians the hypostatic distinctions in the portion of God in His mystery are evidently based on the successive self-revelations of God upon what He has conceded to mankind in the context of His own being through the history of salvation. These manifestations reflect in a way the mystery of a divine Unity at one and the same time single and threefold. But this means that the apparent tritheism of history is corrected by the revealed mystery of the Unity of the Three-in-One. Consequently Trinitarian theology should essentially remain a *negative theology* i.e. a theology that has as its essence non-knowledge.

To a Gregory of Nyssa God in Himself is an obscure light or rather a luminous darkness. With this concept he expressed that other influence which I have indicated above and which became decisive for Maximus. It was a theological influence nourished by Neoplatonist philosophy but made alert in a critical attitude to that philosophy—and here the

position is different from that in the West. For St. Augustine or for a Victorinus—as Hans Urs von Balthasar has shown[2]—there is a legitimate interest in demonstrating in the created world at large or in man the triadic traces of the divine Trinity. For the Eastern Fathers however and especially for Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite in spite of the triads that he discovers in the hierarchies of being every more or less direct relation between the Trinitarian mystery and those triadic manifestations is excluded. What God is in Himself as Unity and Trinity is absolutely distinct from those traces. Even if we must experience proper those representations are only an analogy to the Divine truth itself. At this point Maximus is a follower of Pseudo-Dionysius, Evagrius, and Origen.

Here Maximus quotes Pseudo-Dionysius who says that the supreme essence a divinity of God is not at all, even if celebrated as Monad and Triad known to us or to anybody else as Monad and Triad and Word and who can only be celebrated by us in this way with whatever name every name.[3]

Consequently, it is to negative theology that one must attribute Trinitarian theology proper. For Maximus it is principle is always valid, but it serves a somewhat different character. In his combination of the two influences—of an explicit knowledge of a revealed mystery of a divine Unity and Trinity, and the negative experience of all true knowledge of God—Maximus tries to underline the importance of the revealing activity of God, which gives us a true possibility of entering into communion with Him and new access to the secret of His inmost life. In this way God's absolute Unity becomes a mysterious but tradition qualified unity which again gives Maximus a new freedom to draw nevertheless, some Trinitarian conclusions in regard to his speculations about man and about the world (the *cosmos*).

[2] See *The Theology of Henri de Lubac*, cited, p. 91.
[3] See von Balthasar, *Prayer*, p. 93.

MAXIMUS'S MYSTICAL THEOLOGY OF THE DIVINE TRINITY

Gregory of Nazianzus wrote this in his Theological oration on the Son: "That is why the Monad, in moving since the beginning to the Dyad, stood still at the Triad (in order to find its rest there)." This notion exercised a great influence on Maximus. He used it as a kind of general law in his Trinitarian theology but also in his cosmology (even in his refutation of Origenism). Gregory here describes a movement of divine nature which is not a becoming or a fall (as was the case of the spiritual beings from the original divine Monad in Origen) but rather results on the contrary in a kind of perfection. God Himself is mobile. He moves toward multiplicity without ceasing to be what He is. His nature. Movement presupposes a duality (or at least a distinction in duality), but in the case of the movement of God, it is at the same time a movement in which the end of His rest without ceasing Himself because of the preexposed unity. He expresses through that movement His own infinite perfection.[4]

Of course Gregory preserves at the same time the precise distinction between God and His creation, but Maximus felt free nevertheless to make a subtle application of the idea. For him it is God Himself as *creative and recreative power* which brings the latter (through mediation) from the original coming to be in a movement that is naturally given to the rest of eternal bliss.

Later Maximus commented upon this text of Gregory. The first time is in the *Ambigua to John I*, and the second is in a letter called his *Second Letter to Thomas* (both of which are addressed to the abbot Thomas), where he returned to the same problem.

If we go to the second text we can observe that Maximus precisely underlines the aspect of perfection. For the Platonists and the older Neoplatonists the Monad (the supreme Unity) was the perfect primary Principle. For Maximus, on the contrary, it was precisely in the Triad that the richness

[4] Oratio 29, 2.

of the Monad expressed itself. According to Origen, the Dyad could not be perfect since it indicated in its division a kind of tarrying materiality. Consequently, and this is Maximus's position, the inner Trinitarian movement does not establish an ontological distinction or a multiplicity but marks the perfection of a living circle, the dynamics of a divine Being who makes Himself personal.

Maximus writes: "... the Monad moves in virtue of its richness in order that the Divinity should not be poor, reduced as it would be in a Jewish manner to the limitations of one single person." And he continues: "The Triad marks the limit in virtue of its perfection. . . . Alone, indeed, absolutely alone in being perfect is the noncomposed being, the nondispersed being, who escapes at the same time both the unity of the person, the duality of matter, and the multiplicity of essence." This is one's God who thus becomes perfect in leaving His unity without becoming dual, and who realizes His essence in the Trinity.

However we must add another observation, which is perhaps even more important. In the fifth chapter of his Letter to Thomas Maximus makes a decisive distinction in regard to the mystery of the divine Trinity, which indicates at the same time that the latter is truly mystical and noncomprehensible for a created being. He says that in God "*the nature of His being* and *the mode of His existence* manifest themselves simultaneously and in combination." The Trinitarian mystery thus, as simply this joint manifestation, to faith of divine essence and existence. They are also two aspects of life for created beings, but for men they cannot coincide except in deification, on account of the permanent tension between the unity of nature and the multiplicity of modes.[5]

However there are other texts where Maximus uses this distinction more formally and distinctly. I will refer to two of those texts. In both cases we have a Trinitarian application of a fundamental distinction (used in his anthropology and his doctrine of deification as well as in his christology) between the *principle of nature* (*logos physeos*) and the mode

[5] P. Canart, "La deuxième lettre à Thomas," *Byzantion* 34, p. 432.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 432.

of existence (*tropos hyparxeos*). Fr. Sherwood (and before him Karl Holl, among others) has studied the history of this distinction and has shown that Maximus inherited it in a preliminary form from the Cappadocians, and to some extent from Leontius of Byzantium. It was also shown that Maximus developed the distinction in a rather personal and precise way, and transformed it into an effective instrument in order to solve a number of intricate theological problems.[7] Fr. Alain Riou, O.P., has presented us with the anthropological and soteriological scheme of the same distinction.[8] Thus we know fairly well the value of the distinction for Maximus. In his Trinitarian theology, it allows him to express formally the mystery of the Monad/Triad without pretending in any way to give a rational clue to it. This mystery never consists in that distinction itself, but as we have seen, in *the manner of identity* operative beyond it.

Maximus himself only said[9] that *God is Monad according to the principle of His essence* (another way of expressing the belief that His ontological unity is not affected by the fact that He is hypostatically Three-in-One), *and that He is Triad according to His mode of existence* (which means that the three hypostases are more than just modalities, since they truly constitute the personal life of God).[10]

In the second text (which is in the second part of his *Interpretation of the Lord's Prayer*) he makes it clear that all the Persons of the Holy Trinity *exist essentially* (not only accidentally), and that the Name of the Father is the unique Son, and the Reign of the Father is the Holy Spirit. God the Father is the Father of someone who carries His Name, and He is King, ruling in the Spirit.[11] Thus God *exists* in a manner that defines at the same time His true essence. Maximus expresses this a little later in the same text (and in a somewhat subordinating way) saying that God is "a unique

[7]P. Sherwood, *The Earlier Ambigua of St. Maximus the Confessor*, Rome 1955, pp. 155-168.

[8]See A. Riou, *Le monde et l'Eglise selon Maxime le Confesseur*, Paris 1973, p. 84.

[9]*Mystagogia*, ch. 23.

[10]See here Garrigues, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

[11]Cf. Riou, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

Mind which exists essentially without any cause of His being, and who has begotten the unique Word [*Logos*], existing without a special principle of being [i.e. He is Himself His own principle of being], and is the source of the unique life, which exists essentially in an eternal manner as Holy Spirit [i.e. having in Himself His proper life]."[12]

A serious question, however, is still to be considered: In all of Maximus's formulations, are we really confronted with the mystical Trinity, or perhaps rather with the economic Trinity, i.e. the Trinity seen through the history of salvation? For when he introduces a distinction such as that between essence and existence, Maximus seems to attempt an understanding of the divine mystery, even though he does not in fact speak about revelation, which is available only through the history of salvation. We must reply that it is Maximus's conviction that we do not know in any way whatsoever without revelation whether God is Monad or Triad, and it is on the basis of only that revelation that he feels free to make the distinction. But the distinction itself covers a true mystery, the mystery of the proper manner of being divine. Because of that mystery Maximus is able to establish a combination of positive and negative theology precisely at the point of the distinction. After having established this precision, he may advance in two different directions, mutually exclusive in principle, but nevertheless related: toward the Mystery beyond words and toward a Trinitarian theology of the history of salvation (in Greek terminology, a theology of "economy").

THE "ECONOMIC" TRINITY IN MAXIMUS

First of all we must, once more, look at the link between the two forms of Trinitarian theology. I quote again from Fr. Garrigues: "God is charity. What is important for Maximus is to show that Charity (as a divine quality) within the Trinitarian life transcends hypostatically the mere 'Goodness' of divine nature, and that it is this Trinitarian 'decision' which

[12]See Riou, *op. cit.*, p. 228 f.

represents the point of departure for a scheme of Charity in which God is personally involved, since the Son finally accomplishes His coming into existence as human nature and finally to die in that nature.[34] The German scholar Walther Völker underscores the same idea: Maximus always understands the incarnation as an activity of the Trinity as a whole."[35]

The distinction between *theologia* (the Trinitarian mystery of God as He is in Himself) and *oikonomia* (the mystery of salvation accomplished in the Incarnation) is rarely applied by Maximus, but at the same time he relates the two in such a way that a correspondence is established. The Incarnation is the work of the Holy Trinity and Maximus can state that the Son "*proceeds in whom* and *in whom* He abides" can by no means be transposed with the assertion that the Son "*proceeds* the *nature* of humanity and *in whom* He *becomes* the Christ."[36]

Thus in Maximus' understanding of salvation the economy is never a reversal of or a withdrawal from the Trinitarian life of the monad. It represents the divine Trinitarian life in the dimension of creation and it is not only on account of the Father that the Incarnation takes place through Mary, a woman who is always life-bearing. Christ, the cosmic partner of God, is the economic Trinity. This mystery that presents itself for our participation cannot be for Maximus a mere only a possession of what is given but the Incarnate. We are also invited to imitate the Father who offers the Son and Himself in Him, and thus to imitate the Trinity as a whole.

This Trinitarian aspect of the economy of salvation can be illustrated by a closer study of two different texts. The first of these is taken from Maximus's *Questions to Thalassius* and is a part of his answer to *Question 60*. Here Maximus

[34] *Op. cit.*, p. 156.

[35] W. Völker, *Maximus Confessor als Meister des geistlichen Lebens*, Wiesbaden, 1965, p. 63.

[36] See P. Heinrichs, *Die Struktur der Welt. Die Struktur der Welt in Maximus Confessor*, Freiburg, 1960, pp. 30-38; and L'explication trinitaire de l'économie chez Maxime le Confesseur, in F. Heinzer and Chr. Schönborn, *Maximus Confessor. Actes du Symposium sur Maxime le Confesseur, Fribourg, 2-5 septembre 1980*, Fribourg, 1982, p. 159 ff.

mentions three types of knowledge: rational knowledge, knowledge by notion, and knowledge through direct experience called perceptive knowledge. The first two types in the end give way to the third one, which is the property mystical knowledge of God. All this is integrated into the perspective of economy of salvation. In this context Maximus writes:

> This mystery was conceived by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit before all time. By the first One through proper consent [the Father in His intimate counsel consented to bring creation into His very manifest to the proper knowledge of Himself] by the Second One through personal experience [the Son incarnates in Himself the way of salvation] and by the Third One through cooperation. As a matter of fact the Wisdom [*sophia* in the Greek text] of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is one, since in their essence and power are one and the same. The Father and the Holy Spirit and not grave [the incarnation of the Son] for the fullness of the Father is found essentially in the fullness of the Son, who also possesses, through His Incarnation, the mystery of our salvation. He is there present not in receiving it [as the Father] but in giving His consent to the incarnation of the Son. Likewise the fullness of the Holy Spirit is found essentially in the fullness of the Son's action that he becomes incarnate by cooperating at the ineffable Incarnation of the Son.[37]

It becomes obvious in this text that for Maximus the theology of the Trinitarian mystery forms a basis for his reflections upon the divine economy. Effective revelation is due to the Son, but it is the co-activity of the Three Persons in this act that secures its absolute importance.

The second text is taken from Maximus's *Interpretation of the Lord's Prayer*. It is a passage dealing with the question

[37] *Quaest. ad Thal.* 60, *Patr. Gr.* 90, 624 BC.

of the Logos, or the true knowledge of God and that [illegible] Maximus begins by pointing out that the Word [illegible] thought of very [illegible] teaches us [illegible] a progression [illegible] seem to combine the mystical and the economic perspectives. He goes on to say that the Word himself shows or reveals the other two Persons. But how?

> Since the entire Father and the entire Holy Spirit were essentially and personally with the entire Son even as He was in the form of God before the ages were constituted, but the Father's paternal relation became clear and the Spirit revealed the Son's coessential relation to the Father, when He assumed the form of a servant and was born of the Virgin Mary in time, and since the Son is manifested in his essence by the Father and the Spirit alone, while all the saints are manifested out of love for man [*philanthropia*] from the Incarnate Word with the flesh.[1]

We notice here once more how the Incarnation illuminates the [illegible] Maximus is most concerned to [illegible] theology. It is only by being rooted in the [illegible] and understood the external world. The actual [illegible] fundamental truth about reality to enable a reading of the same basic [illegible] and the mystical reverse.

To [illegible] we should refer to Maximus's [illegible] between *essence* and *judgment*. The [illegible] is closely connected with [illegible] Christ [illegible] and more generally is also related to his dealing with the Church as a [illegible] humanity [illegible] beings and a universal view of creation. For example, [illegible] the existence established things. The world of creation with its "providence" means for him the divine restoration of the original Monad of spiritual beings.

On one occasion Maximus made a triadic construction.

[1] *Pate. Gr.* 90, 856 CD. The text is quoted in A. Riou, *op. cit.*, p. 119, and is also in T. Hausherr, [illegible] unpublished on by Hausherr, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

which seems to be taken [illegible] is the order Monad [illegible] "essence" [illegible] that here he [illegible] but if we compare what he says [illegible] in other places, it becomes [illegible] here, it partly [illegible] the Monad also [illegible] unity of Divine Council, while Providence refers [illegible] to the hypostatic union of the natures in Christ and [illegible]

[illegible] Christ, the first [illegible] and the second part being "moral, [illegible] Logos was [illegible] Christ [illegible] Person of the Trinity became incarnate, [illegible] redeems His proper being and [illegible] Incarnation opens a space [illegible] and of creation, where [illegible] us. It is to this latter aspect that we shall now turn.

THE TRINITY AND THE COSMOS

[illegible] Maximus [illegible] the Ages again and [illegible] theology [illegible] have [illegible] theology [illegible] As a [illegible] Logos [illegible] the Incarnation

[illegible] Dalmais, A. de Halleux, [illegible] Atlanta, Georgia, 1985, p. 44.

> The light of the face of the Lord, which for the apostles surpassed human bliss, belongs to the mystical theology according to *ep*[illegible] [in] the blessed and pure Divinity finds itself in essence beyond the unutterable and unknowable and exceeds completely all vision, all knowledge, all essence absolutely no trace whatsoever to be comprehended by those who were together with it, nor does it allow any power to grasp how and in what manner it is the single cause both of Unity and Trinity for it does not explain the nature of the created order by which the uncreated is known, the unknowable be embraced by finite beings.[18]

He continues with a reference to the distinction we have mentioned above between Providence and Judgment: "For *diaphanês mias* [i.e. the mode of positive theology] *anôthen kata tas* [illegible] *theologias about Providence and Judgment*." (The italics are mine.)

Certain details of this quotation are important. First of all, Maximus speaks here, in a Pseudo-Dionysian manner, about the Monad's essence as *more* than ineffable and unutterable. This arouses the suspicion that *three levels of theology*: the "economic" level, properly speaking, where Unity and Trinity are revealed; the level of mystical revelation, indeed of the hidden, or better, of supra-revelation; and finally the level of pure transcendence, which is the level of the mystery proper. Second, what is hidden is the *manner* of being Unity and Trinity at the same time, not the fact itself since that is revealed. Thus one might conceive of it in an analogical way. Third, Maximus seems to deny a natural theology without revelation: since the same cataphatic mode refers to Providence and Judgment as well as to the specific position of Christ as Revealer.

Yet this attitude does not exclude some kind of manifestation of what is hidden in the visible, as Fr. Riou has well underlined.[19] Fr. Sherwood studied a whole series of adumbrations of the Trinity in creation.[20]

[18] *Myst. Gr.* 91, 1168 AB.
[19] *Op. cit.*, p. 111 ff.
[20] *Op. cit.*, p. 58.

I have already indicated one of these possible adumbrations. According to Gregory of Nazianzus, "That is why the Monad, in moving since the beginning towards the Dyad, stood still at the Triad. As we have said, this text exercised a very great influence on Maximus and helped him transform the cosmological triad of the Origenists—ἵστημι (*histêmi*), κίνησις (*kinêsis*), and γένεσις (*genesis*)—that was linked to their cosmology of two creations with a fall in between, into its orthodox antithesis: *becoming motion fixity*.[21] For if God Himself, who is the One Who Is, moves in order to find His perfect rest (as Gregory indicates), and through this motion is not only Monad but also Triad, it is obvious that His creation is not caused by a motion that is evil in itself but rather that there is a kind of correspondence with the Trinitarian life of God the Creator. Through this very basic fact we already have in creation a sort of adumbration of the Trinity, although this may never be used to expand on the mystery of God's essential life.

Let us now turn our attention to yet another capital text of Maximus, the *Questions to Thalassius*, no. 13. There Maximus seems to speak after all in terms of a kind of natural theology:

> For as by deduction from the beings we believe in regard to God who exists as *what He is* in the same way through these, essence, distinction in [so-called] species we receive information regarding His essential and immanent Wisdom, that He exists and perfects the beings. Through a wise contemplation of creation we receive the idea of the holy Trinity, I mean the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. For the Wisdom of God is eternal and consubstantial power and the Holy Spirit is eternal divinity.[22]

However, a closer analysis will show that we are not confronted here with a natural theology that could in any sense

[21] Fr. Sherwood has demonstrated this convincingly in his work *The Earlier Ambigua of S. Maximus the Confessor and His Refutation of Origenism*, Rome 1955.
[22] *Patr. Gr.* 90, 296 B.

influence the principle of negative Trinitarian theology. For that which is said to be given to us as information through the very constitution of creatures is nothing else than *the natural fact* of the existence of a final Cause and of two of His qualities. Only through continuing this determination with that quadruple revelation that we arrive at a wisdom that makes us realize that this cause is God with as many Father, Son [illegible] and Holy Spirit. (Considerations that are familiar to living beings, though, do present us with this revelation.)[4]

Apart of what part of the same idea is the triad *Being, Well-being, Life*, which is also mentioned as shown a modification by Maximos of an Origenist triad (Make Provider tion by Maximos of an Origenist triad (Goodness Being, Discernment and a Pe[illegible] triad (Goodness Being, Life. Wisdom) goes back to Ne[illegible] of these (Of these two Maximian triads an adumbration of the Trinity which might serve as an image [illegible] God in relation to His creation. This in turn in some way reflects what He is in Himself, without any indication of the *manner* in which He is Unity and Trinity at the same time.[5]

Consequently it is not surprising if we should also find that an adumbration of man as created in the image of God

THE TRINITY AND THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN

Here we must start with another triad which is strictly anthropological in character: *Being, Well-being, Ever-being*. It is related by the classical distinction in some of the earlier Fathers between image and likeness (Gen. 1:26) in the sense that Being and Ever-being refer to the image of God in man, while Well-being (which is included also in Ever-being in the blessed and perfected state of man) refers to the likeness of God in man. Now this very distinction is not without a Trinitarian theology for Maximus says in the first place that God communicated His proper Being to the nature of man as an image (*eikon*) of Himself and He communicates His Goodness and His Wisdom to

[4] See [illegible] "Maximus the Confessor," *The Ascetic Life*, p. 97 ff.
[5] Sherwood, "Maximus the Confessor," *The Ascetic Life*, p. 40

man's likeness (*homoiosis*). Then he underlines that the second and third reveal, as we know, that God is, that He is wise and that He is *living* (Life). This is to say that these qualities reveal the proper *Being, Well-being* and *Ever-being* of God, although in an imperfect and preliminary manner.

This is the anthropological triad of Being, Well-being, and "Ever-being" is another adumbration of God's Trinitarian life and it stands in direct relation to the distinction in man between divine image and divine likeness. Consequently one could expect to find in the very constitution of man—as an image of God, destined for likeness to Him—another "adumbration." In fact, we do find it even though Maximus does not develop it in detail.

In his *Ambigua*, no. 7, he states that the mind, the reason, and the spirit of man have to be conformed to their archetypes: the Great Mind, Logos, and Spirit. And in a passage of *Ambigua*, no. 10, he confirms that this triad of the human soul constitutes an image of the Trinitarian Archetype but also that its *simplicity* and *unity* reflect the divine simplicity, that the *goodness* expressed in the imitation of the true virtues reflects the divine goodness, and finally that the *liberation of man from all that is divisive* reflects God's activity of unification. It is not difficult to find in these references to three basic human activities, references to the three Persons of the divine Trinity. The Father is the principle of unity, the Son is the manifestation of the goodness of God, and the Spirit is the power of unification. (There are certain similarities here to the Trinitarian/psychological speculations of St. Augustine, but the historical evaluation of them is very difficult to ascertain.)

There are therefore in Maximus clear indications of a human *imago Trinitatis* (the image of God in man understood as an image of the Trinity) and this is related to the constitution of man and also to his spiritual potentiality. However, in spite of this fact, Maximus seems to be rather cautious in elaborating this aspect, obviously because his Origenist principles warn against it. These are only imprecise indications in an inscrutable mystery. These indications might serve as a kind of preparation for the true revelation of this

mystery. But, and this is important, they might also serve as a model to inter-human and inter-human relations.

We have seen that for Maximus the [illegible] dimension is [illegible] but that it is dangerous to try to [illegible] and to develop [illegible]. At the same [illegible] must be applied correctly to all [illegible] and to soteriology in all its phases and perspectives.

[illegible] from a treatise [illegible] to general philosophy [illegible] contemplating [illegible] It is precisely here [illegible] the question is [illegible] and [illegible] Our response [illegible] experience and [illegible] with the past.

As a kind of summary [illegible] to refer to a text of Maximus that is of quite [illegible] and which deals with the peculiar [illegible]. The text is from his work on the Lord's Prayer. He [illegible] and describes the attitude of a true Christian in liturgy to the Mystery of the divine Trinity:

> The soul from this moment is as simple and undivided as possible through doctrine, having comprehended as true knowledge [illegible] the delivering power [illegible] of the things separate and distinct. The word now brings it towards unanimous theology, having passed through all things [illegible] gence could not [illegible] the image is conveyed to it, as far as this is possible, and the Word instructs it with the same amount of Wisdom that it could comprehend God, one nature in three Persons, unity in nature, trinity in oneness in persons, and Trinity in persons, though unity in nature, unity in trinity and trinity in unity, not one and the other or one after the

> other or one through the other or again one in the other or one because of the other but indeed the one and same in itself and through itself beside itself and the same with itself. It is unity and Trinity, having been confused [illegible] in an unconfused manner in the same way as the indistinguishable and indivisible distance that is there. Unity according to the principle [*logos*] of nature, i.e. of being, and not according to composition or conjunction or confusion of whatever kind and only according to the principle of being and existence, i.e. not according to distinction or diversity or differentiation of any [ontological] kind, since the Unity is never divided through its hypostases that does not exist in order to be considered in relation to oppositional forms of being or not. The hypostases do not own this unity through conjunction but it is there each time in the [illegible] another manner for the Holy Trinity of the hypostases [i.e. persons] is an unconfused unity of nature and due to its single principle [*logos*] and the Holy Unity-Trinity through its hypostases and due to its own manner of being [i.e. its hypostatical manner of being][36]

[36] [illegible]

CHAPTER 3

The Soteriological Dimension

Soteriology is the doctrine of salvation. For Maximus, however, soteriology in its widest and proper sense is never conceived only as that aspect of salvation that consists in man's liberation from his sinfulness. It is the doctrine (and the mystery) of man's perfection as deification, and through man the doctrine of the participation of the deity of the whole cosmos. Yet, the starting point for any soteriology is always an actual state of deficiency. All this now leads us to some preliminary remarks.

TWO INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The first remark concerns the soteriological dimension. Every soteriology is structured according to a general pattern. The basis of this pattern are (a) an initial situation that demands salvation, (b) a contrary situation where the goal of salvation is achieved, and (c) an agent of salvation who is operating between the other two poles in virtue of his capacity to transform situation 'a' into situation 'b'. In Christian tradition one can observe not only that the two poles 'a' and 'b' mutually presuppose each other (so that the definition and content of the one depends on the definition and content of the other—a fact that is only natural), but also can observe that the pole 'c', the agent of salvation—who in this case is Christ the Savior (specifically the Savior

we know from the Biblical portrait of Christ)—Himself exercises an influence upon the two other poles.

All this now implies that in a Christian theological universe (such as that of Maximus) we should always expect that every phenomenon, every man, and every period in his life is situated somewhere within a soteriological dimension marked by the mutual relations between the three poles. As a matter of fact, it is this field of tension that constitutes the soteriological dimension; it becomes possible to analyze the place of every phenomenon in this context evaluating its position in relation to the different soteriological poles.

This leads logically to the outline of this chapter. First of all, we shall observe Maximus's manner of describing situation "a," i.e. his analysis of the need for salvation. Second, in the same way we must observe his manner of describing position "b," i.e. his vision of achieved salvation. Finally, we shall study his portrait of the Savior and what he has to say about the divine instrument used to fulfill salvation, the mystery of c." The subject is in many ways the most central of all the dimensions in Maximus's theology.

To Maximus it is what we might call the *theandric* (i.e. the divine/human) mystery that is the supreme divine instrument of salvation. But we must ask *in what way* this theandric mystery is instrumental in our salvation. By the very combination of the divine and the human natures through their hypostatic union in Christ? Or through a kind of cooperation of the natural forces included in them? And in the latter case, which is the decisive factor of this cooperation in a monenergetic theology like that of Maximus?

According to Fr Garrigues (in his dissertation on the concept of charity in Maximus and in an article in *Istina*, 1974) any interpretation of Maximus from a more Oriental and hence Cataphatic point of view and of a supposedly more or less Neoplatonic tendency, is likely to misunderstand the true genius of the Confessor. Maximus does not conceive of man's salvation or deification exclusively in terms of a gradual participation in the divine life, a conception that one would expect in the case of a Neoplatonic writer. Maximus understands it more in terms of interpersonal communion, of imita-

tion and active perfection. The effective instrument of salvation, conceived in these terms, is a *"habitual" grace* (a grace of supernatural *habitus*), understood on the basis of a rather Aristotelian philosophy.

As a matter of fact, Maximus's position at this point represents a very interesting anticipation of the theology of grace to be found in the medieval West. Charity, Garrigues says, is this *supernatural* divine gift which, in a non-ontological way, constitutes the new *habitus* of the man who is being saved. Charity is for Maximus no natural human quality, for its perfection lies in the non-natural love of enemies, and even in dying for them.

However, Fr. Garrigues has not succeeded in proving the existence of this non-natural *habitus* in Maximus. I am more inclined to believe that it is the Maximian idea of a dyophysite reciprocity between God and man that is the key to his soteriology.[1]

Let me quote a text that is very decisive at this point. We find it in the *Ambigua*, no. 10:

> They say that God and man are exemplars (*paradeigmata*) one of another; and that God makes Himself man for man's sake out of love, so far as man, enabled by God through charity, deified himself; and that man is wrapped up by God in mind to the unknowable, so far as man has manifested through virtues the God by nature invisible.[2]

Garrigues comments on this text saying that Maximus, supported by his distinction between image and likeness, pushes to an extreme point "the theandric synergism, without questioning the divine priority in the initiative of grace, which in the economy of the incarnation, has restored the divine image in man."[3] The "synergism" is certainly pushed very far in this text, but I doubt whether the reference to the

[1] My position seems to some extent to be confirmed by Basil Studer, O.S.B., in his article "Zur Soteriologie des Maximus Confessor," in Heinzer–Schönborn, op. cit., pp. 239–246.

[2] *Patr. Gr.*, 91, 1113 BC, trans. by Sherwood.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 127

priority of the initiative of grace in the economy of the Incarnation is sufficient as an explanation. For Maximus the point is not at all the problem of the initiative. God's initiative in the economy of salvation is never contested. It is the reciprocity between God and man that constitutes the very basis of this initiative. The text describes a double movement that expresses this reciprocity (of what we might call an onto-tropological kind) in action.

My personal interpretation of this text is that by divine (eternal) condescension there exists "from the beginning" a reciprocity of natures between God and man. For this reason we are allowed to say that man is created in the image of God. This reciprocity, however, should express itself *in action*. Therefore, we also say that man is created toward the likeness of God. Likeness manifests itself on the tropological level ("moral," if we like, though in the widest possible sense), i.e. as the manner of existence on the basis of the principle of nature. (This is the famous distinction between "principle of nature," *logos physeos*, and "manner of existence," *tropos hyparxeos*, a distinction analyzed historically and in Maximus at length by Felix Heinzer in his dissertation *Gottes Sohn als Mensch*, Freiburg 1980.)

God, too, has his "manner of existence." On the inner Trinitarian level, it expresses itself in an eternal movement from Unity through Duality to Trinity. In regard to man it expresses itself (soteriologically) on the basis of the reciprocity of the Incarnation, i.e. God moves tropologically toward man in incarnating Himself. Man in turn, who had been tropologically made passive and turned in a false direction, moves toward God, activated by the divine movement, and thus divinizing himself.

One may ask whether the question of *habitus* is ever really actualized in this system of thinking. The effective instrument of salvation is rather the activation of reciprocity on the human side, as effected by the Incarnation which liberates—through the manifestation of the divine charity—*natural powers* in man related to the likeness of God for which man is destined.

Charity is not only a divine quality, but a divine-human

destiny, based on the ontological reciprocity that God established in creating man in His image and likeness. That is to say that charity alone is the truly *theandric quality in man*, since it is already a theandric quality in God.

After these two preliminary remarks, we turn to the different elements of our outline, and begin by analyzing Maximus's description of that situation which demands salvation (situation "a").

THE POSITION OF MAN WHO REQUIRES SAVING ACTION

Here we must begin with a very central observation: The Incarnation of the Logos, according to Maximus, is not caused or motivated *only* by the fall and by sin, but by man's position vis-à-vis God, by what we have called the divine-human reciprocity. Maximus shows very clearly that the Incarnation would have taken place even without the fall. With this understanding Maximus places himself in line with a tradition in the ancient Church that may be traced back at least to Irenaeus of Lyon (died *c.* 190). According to this tradition man is not created perfect, so his original state is never one of human perfection. He is called to mature and to develop his likeness to God to the point of perfection of his nature as image of God. Likeness is thus the realization (tropological in Maximus, as we have seen) of all that is given as possibility because of man's nature as image of God.

But in spite of that, man's actual situation is not only one of lack of perfection, but one of sinfulness. Maximus describes this in several texts. We will look at two of them, his description of man in the *Ascetic Life* and in *Letter 2*.

Liber Asceticus is given the form of a dialogue between a novice and an old man. The first question the novice puts concerns precisely the human conditions motivating the divine action of salvation: "What was the purpose of the Lord's becoming man?" The old man's answer obviously is the only possible one: "The purpose of the Lord's becoming man was our salvation." But precisely this answer demands a

further explanation which opens up the whole soteriological dimension of what is also the daily life of the monastery, since Maximus views the monastery as a place of salvation.

Thus in Q. 61 Maximus begins to describe the situation of man in need of salvation. He says: "Listen: man made by God in the beginning and placed in Paradise transgressed the commandment and was made subject to corruption and death. We further know that the cause of this disobedience to the divine will was ignorance, as the cause of man's ignorance is the nature of the body. For since it does not even have the nature of [intelligence] . . . [its] knowledge is presupposed even . . . [after] he becomes more precise as to two points."

But it is in order to interest man's state [illegible] grows successively worse [illegible] governed from great [illegible] providence [illegible] ways of God's Providence [illegible] and was called by him [illegible] to the ways of Providence [illegible] to [illegible] in other words, man's progressive alienation from the techniques of sin and ends of moral development is the reason that demands the Incarnation. Such is the basis for the interpretation of history in the mind as in theology of the *Later Ascetica*.[4]

In his *Letter* 2 Maximus includes in his description of sin not only a dimension of demonology but also indicates a psychological cause of the fall of man: the destructive research of his will. First it is self-affection for himself (this we know *philautia* lies at the root of evil; its effects are disastrous because it shuts out from God, and divisions appear in human life).

The active agent here, however, is the Devil, the seducer, divider, and engineer of all the various methods of sin. He tells which man tries to find *pleasure* and avoid *pain*. Yet, in all this, man's will cooperates with the Evil One.

Maximus establishes a kind of chronology in the consecutive fall of man. The first fatal step is his break with God, from which stems the first of three capital evils: *ignorance*. In being isolated from the creative source of his being, man concentrates upon himself in egoistic *self-love*, which is the second in this hierarchy of evils. Finally this egoism brings man to the third evil: *tyranny against his neighbor*. These three evils represent a perverted use of the three constitutive powers of the soul: reason (*logos*) perverted into ignorance, the concupiscible, or desire (*epithumia*) perverted into sensual self-love; and the irascible, or temper (*thumos*) perverted into hatred against one's neighbor.[5]

On the basis of these two texts, and others, we may summarize the essential elements of Maximus's speculation on evil. The cause of sin is the Devil, but in close cooperation with the free will of man—sometimes to the degree that Maximus does not even mention the Devil. Freedom belongs to human nature, to man's character as a being created in the image of God, but man uses it to his own destruction. This classical idea is linked with another conviction of a Platonic tendency: evil is a completely negative phenomenon. At this point Maximus expresses himself in a way that comes very close to Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite. I quote from the prologue to *Questions to Thalassius*: "Evil has not had, has not now, and will never have a proper existence of its own."[6]

Thus seduced both by the Devil and by his own intermediary position in the created cosmos of a spiritual sensible order, man allows himself to fall into sin, preferring the pleasures of the sensible world to his communion with God, and becomes ignorant, forming in himself a kind of likeness to the animals and using his intellectual capacities in a continuing search for pleasures where his self-love (his *philautia*) always directs him toward what is supposed to satisfy his sensual lust.

This pleasure, though, can never be separated from its opposite, *pain*. Maximus develops at this point a fatal dialectic. (In Greek he plays with the words *hedone*, pleasure, and *odune*, pain.) The polarity of pleasure and pain is, as a

[4] See *Patr. Gr.* 91, 996 D-997 A.
[5] Ed. Laga-Steel, p. 29.

[6] Our quotations are from *Patr. Gr.* 90, 912A, trans. by P. Sherwood.

matter of fact, introduced by God Himself into the life of sinful man as a punitive and purgative power. According to this dialectic, man always seeks to find pleasure and avoid pain, an attempt in which he will never succeed, and which is in fact the direct cause of his despair. This constitutes man's destructive development in evil, as is characteristic of Maximus's understanding of sin. Sin is never for him a fixed state, but a movement against nature that deteriorates, in the same way as a human life lived in accordance with nature would be a good movement toward the final goal of human life, which is deification.

Let us once more return to the prologue of *Questions to Thalassius* and read part of its summary on the matter:

> Thus, the immense and innumerable host of passions invades men's life. Their life becomes in this way deplorable. For the human beings honor the very cause of the destruction of their existence and pursue themselves, without knowing it, the cause of their corruption. The unity of human nature falls into a thousand pieces, and human beings, like beasts, devour their own nature. In fact, in trying to obtain pleasure and avoid pain, instigated by his self-love, man invents multiple and innumerable forms of corrupted passions. If, for example, on account of pleasure, one cultivates self-love, one awakes in oneself gluttony, pride, vanity, self-conceit, avarice, greed, tyranny, arrogance, ostentation, cruelty, fury, a sense of superiority, obstinacy, contempt for others, indignity, licentiousness, prodigality, debauchery, frivolity, vaunting, slackness, insult, offence, prolixity, chatting, obscenity, and all other vices of this kind. But if self-love is hit by pain, this gives rise to wrath, envy, hate, hostility, revenge, offence, slander, calumny, gloominess, lack of hope, discomfort, false accusation of the divine Providence, indifference, dispiritedness, despondency, pusillanimity, lamentation, melancholy, bitterness, jealousy, and all the other vices that are due to lack of pleasure. The mixture of pleasure and pain causes wickedness—this

> is what some call the synthesis between the opposite elements of evil—and gives rise to hypocrisy, irony, cunning, dissimulation, flattery, adulation, and the other devices belonging to this mixed craftiness.[7]

Thus in Maximus a whole hierarchy of vices manifests itself within this dialectic, either—as here in the prologue of *Quaest. ad Thal.*—in the form of a nearly unlimited multitude, or (more often) in the form of the Eastern (especially Evagrian) catalogue of *eight capital vices*, beginning with gluttony and fornication and ending with vainglory and pride. The point here is, however, that the inventive power of man, which in the first place is due to his rational constitution, engages itself successively in a false search for forms of passion, irresistibly ending up in a despair that is at the same time the dead end of evil, and thus the necessary condition for an acceptance of the saving act of God in the Incarnation.

This fact undoubtedly represents the soteriological dimension of our miserable situation. All that happens in our sinful life contains this dimension and calls for the other side, the vision of a truly good and natural life where all the capacities of man are utilized for his healthy development. There the final goal of his life appears in the vision of his deification or divinization (*theosis*) by grace, on the basis of his human constitution as created in the image of God. We now turn our attention to that vision.

THE HAPPY STATE OF MAN AS CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

Maximus shows some restraint in describing this state. We look in vain in his writings for a beautiful picture of the perfect life of Adam before the fall. He simply does not seem to have believed in it. At this point he manifests a striking contrast to John of Damascus, who otherwise in many ways followed Maximus. Once he even says in an abrupt

[7]Ed. Laga-Steel, p. 33 ff.; the reader may excuse my somewhat arbitrary choice of English synonyms in these lists.

way that Adam fell into sin at the very moment of his creation.[8] Furthermore, we have already indicated that Maximus follows the line of Irenaeus in regarding the first man as not yet perfect.

But this does not mean that Maximus lacks a vision of human destiny. He expects it to be beautiful to be the final fulfillment of the original scheme of salvation, perfection of man already set before his fall. We shall therefore have to look first at Maximus' version of the general scheme of salvation and then see precisely what his ideas about the image and likeness in man and his description of a perfect humanity and universe imply. Each of these themes is very vast, so within the outline of this chapter only fragmentary indication can be given.

The *Fifteenth Anathema* of Justinian against the Origenists attacked the very notion of an identity between beginning and end. Maximus provided a more subtle refutation of Origen in which he systematically avoids the idea. Sherwood has observed that even Maximus himself does not seem to think in terms of an identity between beginning and end, but in general he does not.[9]

Personally I am inclined to look at it for Maximus it was not necessary to avoid the category that only at a coincident location of beginning and end could there be continuity between a less perfect original state of man. He may in principle pay tribute to the state of Adam before the fall, but he does not, as we have seen, give the impression that he believed it had been put into practice in an imaginable period of human history. At this point he rather resembles the existentialist theologians of modern times. The tribute he pays almost never hinders the unlimited possibilities opened before man. These may be realized in the moment when man, restored to the dispositions of his

[8] See *Quaest. ad Thal.* 61. Pour Ce Qui Est De Adam A. Jaeme to generalist

[9] On all his studies on Maximus, and at an early stage of Maximus research, Hans Urs von Balthasar struggled with the complex relationship between Maximus and Origenism on the possibility of an Origenist crisis in the life and education that varied through an article by M. Viller in 1930. Von Balthasar shares with Sherwood the honor of having found the key to the problem.

image character through Christ Incarnate, makes a continual effort to live out the likeness of God, which is the goal of his life.

We must notice the way Maximus makes use of the ancient distinction between the image and likeness of God in man. In fact, some of the earlier fathers and Christian writers used it, others did not. Maximus's version comes close to that of Origen, but the two are not identical. The distinction in Origen seems to indicate a certain weakness in the constitution of created man. Only the mind (the intelligence) carries the divine image, and it is in liberating himself from his fascination to the body (a fascination that is due to the second act of creation only) that he regains the divine likeness (constitutive of the first creation).

Maximus is not at all so straightforward, though there are certain similarities between his own position and that of Origen. But, as I have indicated before,[10] one should also ask about the influence of Diadochus of Photike (a bishop and spiritual writer who participated in the Council of Chalcedon in 451). Diadochus developed in chapter 89 of his *Gnostic Chapters* an interpretation of the distinction which resembles that of Origen. For him the likeness is above the image. It is a supernatural character and is realized in the virtues as is the case in Origen.

Now, the position of Maximus resembles that of Diadochus too, but they are not identical. Here I return to the difference of interpretation between Fr. Garrigues and myself which I dwelt on above. For Garrigues, the influence of Diadochus on the theology of Maximus seems to be rather important. I am inclined to think that it should be considered, but that it was not decisive.[11]

Maximus too, says that the image of God was given to man from the beginning and that the likeness is to be acquired through a spiritual process. In fact, the distinction

[10] L. Thunberg, *Microcosm and Mediator: The theological anthropology of Maximus the Confessor* (Lund 1965).

[11] For a critical discussion on Maximus at this point see Thunberg, pp. 55 ff., and for a growing statement by Garrigues on the influence of Diadochus see Garrigues, *op. cit.*, p. 97 f.

helps to underline that process. Maximus also states that the inhabitation and formation of Christ in the Christian may be interpreted as a development of the likeness. This development is seen as a kind of imitation of God, a manifestation of the divine virtues, as in a mirror, and in general as a moral activity of man. These are all similarities in relation to Diadochus, but they are marginal.

For what concerns Maximus most of all is the central fact that I have already indicated: *the reciprocity between God and man.* On the *ontological* level this reciprocity is one between an archetype and its image. It should become manifest on the *existential* level through a double movement: God's movement toward man in the Incarnation (or in different incarnations or embodiments) and man's movement toward God in the imitative process of deification. Likeness, for Maximus, is to be found on the existential level, as we have seen several times. Man is created with a free power of determination, which has to be used freely for his *well-being* for an existence of good quality that is more than an ontological *status,* not because that *status* lacks something ontologically speaking, but because—as in all beings (all substances)—it should be worked out in existence, and this existence should reflect the reciprocity between God and man, i.e. a likeness. In the sense of divinization, this likeness certainly contains a supernatural aspect, but this aspect is hardly a precondition, being rather an effect.

Now, let us turn to the second vision I have indicated: *the perfect liturgy.* The reciprocity between God and man for Maximus implies a natural capacity, and even will, to move in the direction of the other. This movement does not mingle the natures, but manifests, through existential relationship, their reciprocity. In the case of God this results in Christ the Logos, in what we might call a hypostatic theandricity, which in the last instance in the case of man permits him to move, as it were, beyond himself. This "beyond" means not only beyond the natural, but also beyond the existential. At that last point Maximus refers to mysticism proper.

On this transcendence at the frontier of nature and existence Maximus makes some comments in the first of his

Theological and Economic Centuries. The text deals with the mystery of the last three cosmic days:

> He who in a divine way has fulfilled the sixth day through the works and thoughts that are appropriate and himself with God has completed well his work [here a reference to the completion of God's creative work in six days is implied, and to the fact that all He created was "good"; here it is also presupposed that this completion on the part of man means that he has exercised ascetic practices, rational contemplation of things and has even cultivated his proper theology], he has passed in his mind all hypostasis which is subject to nature and time. And he is transported to the mystical contemplation of the ages of ages and in an unknowable way he makes sabbath in his mind, in abandoning and surpassing beings entirely. [As I have said, we are here beyond the natural and the existential.] And he who is made worthy of the eighth day is risen from the dead—I refer to all which comes after God: sensible and intelligible things, words, and thoughts—and he lives the happy life of God, who alone is called and is the Life, in the sense that he himself becomes God through divinization.[12]

We may ask whether this vision of the final beatitude does not presuppose both a strictly radical distinction between image and likeness and a whole theology of supernatural grace. Personally, I do not think so. The mystery of the eighth day lies even beyond the level of likeness. It rests, as it were, in the naked reciprocity of God and man. This mystery is also beyond any *habitus* in man. Maximus is not preoccupied with a habitual perfection, but rather with the mystery of reciprocity as such.

This reciprocity leaves us with a kind of "empty space," or void, between the Uncreated and the created order (the latter represented in man). In that "space" man moves intentionally, and in that movement he is divinized without in any

[12] *Patr. Gr.* 90, 1104 AB.

[illegible] follow one possible way of exposition.

In this doctrine Maximus is influenced by Pseudo-Dionysius [illegible] basis of the [illegible] the consequence of which [illegible] between [illegible] but is [illegible] Yet at the same time the divine [illegible] because of [illegible] between human nature and [illegible] Yet it is characteristic of [illegible] Maximus that it is effected under the [illegible] of Chalcedon and later [illegible] per se coherence but a threat any change or violation of the natures.

This Maximian principle permits him to state two things. There is no human or natural power that can deify him, but there exists on the other hand a reciprocal relationship between God and man that permits him to become deified to the degree in which the effects of the Incarnation are contained in him.

Man thus does not possess a natural power to become deified, but the acts of divine liberality (for example baptism) permit him to choose as his true goal (in spite of and

[illegible] which for him constitutes perfect [illegible]

[illegible] secondary examination can take place in him, an examination of his virtues (both ascetic and theological) which reveals in a continuing way the attributes of God and the [illegible] between God and man. Through this revelation man becomes ready to devote himself to the mystical void, filled by the grace of God in the [illegible] without representations. It is thus the [illegible] of the existential possibilities of access for the basis of the human nature as created in the image of God) but not necessarily a supernatural [illegible] that prepares him to receive—in the [illegible] void—the true divinization [illegible] mystery which is ek- [illegible]

[illegible] goal of salvation, the e[illegible]h" in Maximus, which, however, does not refer to the additional, and deviative, [illegible] about the mystery of the active agent of this salvation.

[illegible] SAVIOR AS [illegible]

Christology [illegible] in Maximus of course requires a chapter of its own. Yet I have chosen here not to give a fuller adequate and complete description of [illegible] but in the [illegible] to treat the point of view of [illegible] What we need for the time being [illegible] what we might call the [illegible] of Maximus's system.

Maximus's [illegible] God's [illegible] revelation and [illegible] are not entirely clear. He presents us [illegible] with different emphases [illegible] the Savior as [illegible] the human side of [illegible] has come out of the Alexandrian [illegible] of Christ and Maximus's [illegible] have every [illegible] in the Eastern tradition [illegible] Maximus puts strong stress on the humiliation as

an effective instrument of salvation of which—at least from one point of view—the redeeming death is only a logical consequence. Thus the different aspects are complementary. One such aspect occupies no exclusive place. The incarnation itself is the supreme act of divine grace which manifests and carries out the effective saving relationship between God and man. But saying this we must always remember that incarnation was to be understood in terms of the doctrine of Chalcedon. This means that incarnation does not simply mean man's becoming God's partner in a saving but God's becoming man's flesh in order to reveal himself as true God and true man, truly united but without confusion or fusion. In other words, divine action is always understood by Maximus as an aspect of redemption. The act of salvation understood in this way is not a one-sided act so that God, as it were, forces Himself upon man. Nor is it a divided act so that Christ as the redeemer stands over against the merciful Father as in the predominant Western tradition, but a cooperative act in which the deity is converted and that has to be understood in the way of the chapter on the Trinitarian dimension.)

In this perspective then a number of different aspects can be developed. I will enter into only three of them: the sacrificial aspect, the ascetical aspect and the gnostic aspect. The sacrificial perspective of redemption is expressed in a passage of the *Mystagogia*, 24. There Maximus writes:

> If as He has said [reference to 2 Cor 8:9] God is the poor one in making Himself poor in condescension for us in accepting for Himself in compassion the sufferings of the others, and in suffering mystically out of goodness until the end according to the measure of suffering of everyone, even more obviously who he became God, who, imitating the divine philanthropy, cures through Himself in a divine manner the sufferings of the suffering, and who manifests in his attitude the same power as God, in the analogy of the providence of salvation.[13]

[13] *PG* 91, 713 B

Maximus thus says that the Incarnation implies a poverty that suffers for others and this suffering has the validity of a model, saving man's situation. The reference is not to a reconciliation in the strict sense, but to a condescension to a state of suffering for those who have become his brethren. This is exactly the aspect Maximus prefers to underline. *The condescending philanthropy invites man to the very end to an imitation that liberates him from his anti-human egoism.* This imitation is carried out in terms of nature which are, however, manifest on the human level of salvation. And that in itself marks a divine victory over the Devil who has imprisoned man in his own egoism. By representation and as a model, this scheme is realized in Christ and when we are incorporated into Him, we are introduced into the restored dialectic of positive reciprocity, which He represents and in which salvation takes place.

The *ascetical aspect* appears, for example in a passage of *Liber Asceticus* (chapters 10-13) where the old monk explains to the novice how Christ defeated the Devil in manifesting His absolute obedience to the double commandment of charity:

> To begin with I quote from chapters 10 and 11:
>
> Now then, as the devil knew that there are three things by which everything human is moved: I mean food, money, and reputation; and it is by these two that he leads men down to the depths of destruction—with these same three he tempted Him in the desert. But Our Lord, becoming victor over them, ordered the devil to get behind Him. Such then is the mark of love to God.[14]

I continue with a quotation from chapter 12 where Maximus treats the history of Christ's charity toward those who have been His enemies and who have crucified Him:

> Blasphemed, He was long suffering; suffering, He patiently endured. He showed them every act of love

[14] *PG* 91, 920 C

[illegible] ought back by His [illegible] toward those egged on. [illegible]

Maximus adds in chapter 15:

[illegible] He [illegible] keeping the [illegible] He right [illegible] the human and [illegible]

[illegible] the double [illegible] Heraclitus

The center a first finally, can be found in the [illegible] but theology proper—open to man in salvation—[illegible] contemplation in negative (apophatic) [illegible] that Maximus [illegible]

> In uniting Himself with every man, in a [illegible] [illegible] He was [illegible] He did not know the end through the beginning.[1]

Here we are confronted with the truly supernatural

[1] [illegible] the text by Sherwood

[illegible] Ch. 60, see C.

knowledge" of God manifested as mutual communion. It [illegible] the reciprocity between God and man that constitutes its [illegible] of bliss. The basis that man [illegible] however, is a kind of lack of knowledge which Maximus expresses admirably, and also in an unusually personal way in the [illegible]

> [illegible] could not know his [illegible] would be and [illegible] In this way he [illegible] through the [illegible] he did not know the end through the beginning.[2]

And later he adds:

> After the transgression [of the divine will] one can [illegible] explain the end by the beginning but only the beginning by the end.[3]

This is obviously a very central [illegible] Maximus' World [illegible] and end are identical, even though they are not in regard to [illegible] but as God both is presented as [illegible] to man, and this very fact [illegible] there is not yet [illegible] *theandric* dimension. To this [illegible] we shall devote our attention in the next chapter.

[2] [illegible] Ad Th. 61

[3] Ibid. 6

CHAPTER 4

The Theandric Dimension

The term "theandric" needs further clarification. We have used it already but only in an indefinite sense. It was in itself a very constructive innovation in the early Church. Its presupposition is christological. "Theandric" designates the unique and new relationship that is established in Jesus Christ as being both fully human and fully divine, God and man as cooperating for the benefit of the whole creation, not separated and yet not mixed, not confused and yet in full harmony. One might also say that the full implications of the term "theandric" could only become apparent after the definitions of the Council of Chalcedon, where what is *theandric* in Christ is also defined as *persona*.

Maximus is among the first Christian writers to use the term frequently and freely. Thereby he introduces a whole dimension of Christian thinking for which the reality behind the term is of the utmost importance. Life itself is marked by Christ's incarnation to such an extent that there is always a theandric dimension in it. For Maximus however, the primordial background is to be found in Pseudo-Dionysius whose influence upon him is at this point decisive.

In his *Letter 4* addressed to Gaius, Pseudo-Dionysius uses the expression "*the new theandric energy*" (in the first period of the Monothelite controversy this was falsified to "one theandric energy") in *Ambigua* 5 and in the *Opuscula theologica et Polemica* 7 Maximus gives his own interpretation of this term. Maximus states that Pseudo-Dionysius's

expression should be understood in an orthodox and Chalce-
[illegible] to be to the divine and the human
[illegible] two [illegible] this is also
[illegible] which speak of one but
[illegible] energy as Maximus understands it.[1]

This presents a comparison between the two energies
[illegible] importance of Maximus' view as it concerns him
[illegible] two energies. One
[illegible] becomes the *pre*
[illegible] The point is that [illegible] make possible a
[illegible] which [illegible] human be-
[illegible] but also the goal
[illegible] corresponding to Himself as we saw in the last chapter.

Thus in the chapter 5 of the *Ambigua* Maximus speaks
[illegible] with the
[illegible] hypostatic
[illegible] Maximus discusses [illegible] by a term
[illegible] and [illegible] between the two
[illegible] which [illegible] would [illegible]
[illegible] Maximus also denies this identity as antithetical to
(*ἀντιθετικῶς*)

The [illegible] Maximus affirms
[illegible] the [illegible] and
[illegible] is preserved during [illegible] reveals
that this dimension is the divine-human dimension as
seen in a cosmic, universal and soteric (*σωτηρικός*) perspective
[illegible] key to all study of the true nature of man in this
context.

[1] See *Patr. Gr.* 91 A and 1056 B.
[2] *Ibid.* 1056 D to 1057 A.

MAN'S MICROCOSMIC CONSTITUTION AS AN ANTICIPATORY SIGN OF GOD'S INCARNATION

Maximus regards the created constitution of man as an ontological preparation for the eschatological mystery of theandrism.

Man's task is a real mission in the world, and it pre-
[illegible] for its complete realization.
[illegible] to the idea of *man as micro-*
cosm. (a) his understanding of the relation between unity
and multiplicity; (b) his christological interpretation of the
[illegible] and (c) the influence of the Cappadocians
[illegible] made use of [illegible] Christian
sense. Furthermore, at this point a decisive influence should
also be seen in Nemesius of Emesa."

In Nemesius the idea of man as microcosm is precisely
united to a *divine task* of unifying through himself the op-
posed poles of the world. It is not only through his constitution
which reflects the world that man is a microcosm. It is also
through an act of mediation. God has placed him in an inter-
mediary position in order to carry out this act. The very fact
that the things of the world are reflected in man presents
him actually with a vocation to gather them together for his
and their final goal. He should reconcile opposite phenomena:
mortal creatures with immortal, corporeal, rational beings with
nonrational beings, etc. In this way man should function as
a world in miniature, and for this reason he was created as a
replica [illegible] the whole cosmos."

Maximus too underlines the active nature of the task of
mediation. [illegible] is a capital text in this regard, but
there are [illegible] other texts. An important one is to be found
in [illegible] Mystagogia. Maximus's interpretation
of the Divine Liturgy to which we shall return presently
[illegible] In chapter 6 Maximus proposes under the
[illegible] of an unknown old man (who might be Sophro-

[1] See Thunberg, *Microcosm*, p. 144 f. also for a wider treatment of the whole
[illegible] will be found on pp. 49-152.
[2] See Nemesius, *De Natura Hominis*, 1, *Patr. Gr.* 40, 529 ff.

nus, his spiritual master and friend) that Scripture and the universe should be contemplated as a man. Now the idea of the universe as a man is of special interest to us. This idea he develops in chapter 7. There the universe is seen as a *Makranthropos*, a great man. In itself this represents an opposite perspective to that of man as microcosm, but the concepts are of course parallel. As the world consists of visible and invisible things, the cosmic man consists of body and soul. And this dual composition of both spheres is reflected mutually in the sense that the spiritual man represents the intelligible essences of the world, the types and logoi of the sensible things, the body just as the whole is the type of the sensible things. As there is only one man, just united through body and soul, linked together as a unity of the same nature, so likewise is there only one world constituted of its different elements.

This analogy is very clear, and the universe, however, is not truly a static fact. The duality should be transformed into a unity that is realized by a mediation. This task of mediation is assigned to man as the second and decisive priest. This task is chosen by man as a sinner who gets himself deeply on the world (especially on its sensible elements) out of this mastery. Only this may through Christ's Incarnation in Christ can this task or active mediation take place. Thereby it becomes a truly theandric task. The Incarnation, which was foreseen as the perfection and fulfillment of the final task of mediation, becomes its only possible cause.

This very last point leads us to the second aspect of the theandric dimension: the Incarnation is not only (as in Origen) a kenosis secondary measure caused by the fall, but is in fact at the core of God's plan in regard to man and the created world. Maximus emphasizes very strongly that God willed continually to make Himself incarnate and the fall is thus only a retarding and supplementary factor in regard to this great original and eternal plan of the Triune God.

THE TRIPLE EMBODIMENT IN THE WORLD AS A MANIFESTATION OF THE PERMANENT DIVINE WILL TO BECOME INCARNATE

In a very central statement Maximus says that always and in all His Word God wills to effect the mystery of His embodiment [*en sômatôsei*].[1] This is also an assurance of God's final intention in regard to creation. In this context Maximus often speaks of a threefold embodiment, almost a graduation. For this reason Alain Riou, OP, uses the term *incarnation* and admirably summarizes the triple embodiment:

> The incarnation of the *Logos* in the *logoi* of created beings, the time of the creation of the world and of the four elements when the Spirit of God covered the waters, the incarnation of the Logos in the *logoi* of Scripture and the four Gospels, when the Spirit inspired the "prophets", the incarnation of the Logos in our flesh, in the man "of our kind," in the humanity that is ours, realizing the fullness of the four cardinal virtues when the Spirit covered the Virgin with His shadow.[2]

This threefold embodiment represents an economy of Word more fundamental than one which is motivated only by the fall of man. But what does it imply?

Contemplation of the principles (*logoi*) of creation not only belongs to the natural attitude of man toward things created by Him, but also the mediating work of the Spirit in Him sustains and dominates it. The reasonable (*logikê*) element in man is capable of analytical insight into created things to reach their *logoi*. But this insight is at the same time a gift of grace in the sense of a living divine communication.

[1] *Ambigua*, PG 91, 1084 CD, trans. by Sherwood, p. 69.
[2] R. Riou, *Le monde et l'Église selon Maxime le Confesseur*, Paris 1973, p. 64.

Maximus proposes [illegible] relationship of man to the words and meanings (*logoi*) of Scripture. [illegible] Scripture the living Logos illuminates [illegible] in regard to the [illegible] the [illegible] key to [illegible] the economy of salvation as a whole [illegible] the supreme divine goal [illegible] Man created in the image [illegible] a key to understanding [illegible] understand it as [illegible] that process of [illegible] supreme level [illegible]

[illegible] power and [illegible] the constitution and meaning [illegible] the [illegible] deals with the question [illegible] becoming flesh [illegible] since we are [illegible] flesh [illegible] the blood and not to break [illegible] considerations [illegible] beings are [illegible] as the [illegible] that Maximus goes on to [illegible] the [illegible] the bones, which are [illegible] the Logos does [illegible] the sacramental communion has [illegible] function: to link man to the Logos as embodied

[illegible]

in creation and to mark the borderline to that absolute mystery which is the hidden life of God. Here [illegible] but exclusively in terms of a negative [illegible] reality opens itself to him at this [illegible] the very word that separates, and through [illegible] The [illegible] coherence of this interpretation is [illegible] shown in the adjacent sections of the same text. We quote from three [illegible]

> We can also say that the flesh of the Logos is the [illegible] knowledge and that the bones are the ineffable theology. In the same way as the blood is transformed into flesh, so is knowledge transformed [illegible]. Besides, the [illegible] as the bones are [illegible] the flesh and blood.

> [illegible] says that the flesh and blood are [illegible] providence, since [illegible] that the bones are the [illegible] acceptable opinion.

> Furthermore, the flesh of the Logos is also the perfect [illegible] of human nature [illegible] and knowledge. The blood of [illegible] destined to [illegible] the bones [illegible] are then unknown [illegible] that keeps that nature in existence, being.

> [illegible] an even more subtle [illegible] as the flesh is the voluntary [illegible]

> cation through the virtues and that the blood is the perfection in truth through death (i.e. the mortification of representations) while the bones are the primary and inaccessible principles about God which are found in us, then even he speaks well and remains in an appropriate insight.[4]

The supreme Maximian idea about the five mediations of man and of Christ as his substitute and Savior expresses this truth in an intimate vision which we shall deal with in a moment. However we must first prepare ourselves through a short analysis of another text from the *True Image to Thalassius* (no. 60) which leads into the mystery of the Incarnation proper—the Christic mystery as Maximus calls it. This forms the basis of all that Maximus has to say about the theandric dimension as such. It is a fairly long text so we shall only point to some of its details and quote a short but central passage.

In the first part Maximus shows clearly that he is the guardian of a rather strict version of the doctrine of Chalcedon: the unity of the person (the *hypostasis*) of Christ does not in any way affect the duality of the natures. Second Maximus insists on this text as in so many others on the Trinitarian aspect of the Incarnation. We have already commented on this aspect of the text but an additional remark is appropriate here. Maximus forbids the introduction of the aspect of time into Trinitarian theology in spite of the fact that one of the persons of the holy Trinity became incarnate in time. And yet on the other side he professes a Trinitarian preknowledge of what the incarnate Christ will be. Thus he distinguishes strictly between mystical and economic theology while presupposing a secret link between them (see chapter 3 above).

In one place Maximus gives a subtle indication of this matter. He says two things: (a) that the hypostatic union is conceived eternally (and in the Trinity) and (b) that through this union (which is the supreme expression of the meaning of the Incarnation as we have seen) mobile beings

[4] Ed. Lagi-Steel, p. 239 ff.

must conclude their natural movement toward God who is by nature unmobile (but we might add existentially not immune) and in doing so imitate the existential intra-Trinitarian movement and the economic incarnational divine movement toward them. It is only logical then that Maximus should end his exposition in this passage with a refutation of the Origenist myth about a pre-existent Monad of rational beings.

In a very central passage of the text Maximus again gives us a clue to his incarnational thinking:

> The Logos, God by essence, became man and messenger of the divine will. He let the most intimate ground of the goodness of the Father appear (if one may say so), and showed in Himself the goal for which created beings were created. For it is for Christ—i.e. for the Christic mystery, that all time and all that is in time has received in Christ its beginning and its end. The union between the determined and the undetermined, the finite and the infinite, the limited and the unlimited, and also between Creator and creature between rest and movement was conceived before the times as foretold as accomplishment at the end of time, passing through itself fulfillment to the preknowledge of God. This was so in order that the beings which are mobile by nature should find Him who is by essence absolutely immobile—when their movement toward themselves and toward each other had reached its goal—and also in order that they should gain through experience an active knowledge of Him, in whom they were made worthy to find their rest and have in themselves, always unchangeable, the enjoyment of this knowledge.*

Let us now turn our attention to Maximus's vision of the [illegible] partly indicated in the text just quoted. Our description of it—a fairly detailed one—will constitute the third and last subsection of this chapter.

* *Pater* Gr. 90, 621 BC.

THE FIVEFOLD MEDIATION OF MAN AS A PERFECT REALIZATION OF THE THEANDRIC DIMENSION OF THE UNIVERSE

The most extensive treatment of this division is to be found in the text *Ambiguum* number 41. We find other versions in Maximus' commentaries on the texts of *Ambiguum* 41

Maximus sees at work in the universe much the same cosmic dynamism as we find in the Areopagite. He should do more than simply offer a description of the universe. His task is to explain it by the causality of the uncreated Logos. He wishes to show how everything exists not for its own sake but for the sake of the whole. Each of the various orders of species in nature (their perfection) is ultimately grounded in the Logos. But its reason for existing is not found in itself but in the Logos who is God and who is the same for Maximus as for Dionysius. The Incarnation as a concrete motivation for the creation of the world was foreseen from all eternity by God. Sin and the foreseen fall of man could not prevent the world from coming into being. Even if there had been no fall, the world would have been created and the uncreated Logos would have become incarnate. For it is for the sake of the Incarnation that the universe was created. It is for this reason that the Incarnation would have taken place even without sin. But after the entrance of sin through the fall the five oppositions are all first effected by Christ and by man in Him afterwards.

What are then the *five oppositions* along with which mediation takes place? If we start from the top of the hierarchy they are (1) between the created and the uncreated (2) within the world of created things between the intelligible and the sensible (3) within the sensible world between heaven and earth (4) on earth between paradise and the world of men (5) in humanity between man and woman or the masculine and the feminine. In all these cases man is assigned a special function. He should begin with his own division, the fifth which for Maximus stands in a certain tension in relation to God's

original intention for the human race. However it is very important to notice that none of these divisions is evil in itself nor are they caused directly by the fall or by sin. But with sinfulness as there for evil powers will always use these distinctions to create sinful divisions.

The mediations that should be carried out by man and are already carried out by Christ (though in an inverted order from that of man). Thus we are going to call the fifth mediation which is related to the first distinction the first mediation etc. Let us analyze them one by one starting with the mediation between the sexes.

The First Mediation: Between the Sexes

According to Maximus, sexual differentiation (that is to say that part of sexuality which is related to procreation) or sexual intercourse or at least a great part of it was brought in by God because of the fall. Before the fall another form of procreation would have been provided for us. Consequently, the first mediation is particularly applicable to those elements of created life that are separated because of sin and are against the original intention of God. The reconciliation between man and woman thus belongs to the process of purification from sin and evolves for the Christian the new freedom in Christ conveyed to him through baptism.

Here one might ask whether on this strictly human level it is at all possible to talk about a theandric dimension. We can do so at least in one way since all the mediations are related and form a chain. But we can do so also for another reason, as Christ the Saviour who carries out this mediation as the first. In his case as well he does as man is always correlated actively with His divine nature.

Here we must pose two special questions: (1) How does Maximus understand the man-woman duality? And (2) how is the first mediation carried out by Jesus Christ?

At the outset it should be remembered that Maximus's evaluation of marriage is considerably higher than that of his predecessor Gregory of Nyssa, who seems to have influenced

Maximus in this matter. Yet his general view of sexuality as the [illegible] negative since, as we have seen, he regards this form of procreation as a secondary [illegible] (due to the fall), for the [illegible] and immortality that God wanted to give man [illegible] necessarily linked to the fatal dialectic [illegible] pleasure and pain that appears in man's life [illegible]. The very [illegible] world [illegible] today is marked by his sin. But since Maximus presupposes that God had prepared another form of human multiplication and fertility for man the non-sinner, this negative perspective [illegible] the generative [illegible] positive [illegible] elements are [illegible] effectively under the principle (*logos*) of the common human nature.

[illegible] human. First [illegible] Jesus [illegible] as every man, but he was conceived without [illegible] and without destruction of [illegible]. In this way Christ broke the slavery of death for Himself and was free to accept a death [illegible] voluntary death. Secondly [illegible] Maximus identifies the [illegible] with anger (*thumos*) and concupiscence (*epithumia*) because the sexual relationship has become the symbol *par excellence* of the life of passions. When the Apostle says that in Jesus Christ there is neither male nor female, this means that He has conquered the passions [illegible] under the *logos* of [illegible] and that is exactly a true mediation between the sexes.

Now for the Christian this has some consequences. He has himself to transform the passions into ordered values under the common principle of all that is human; he must engage in an imitation of Christ, a [illegible] also the [illegible] already embodied in a preliminary way in the *logoi* of created beings. Marriage is not rejected; it is instituted by God Himself. But Christ has indicated a more

noble form of relationship between man and woman, a relationship in their common *logos* of human nature.[18]

The Second Mediation: Between Paradise and the Inhabited World

This distinction, too, is linked to the fall, and once more a reference to the common *logos* is actualized. But here it is [illegible] the aspect of *mortification* that predominates. Paradise [illegible] for Maximus a transcendent reality. It is earth that is divided up in this way. And consequently Christ the man is in the first place the agent of this mediation. Maximus [illegible] that Christ sanctified the inhabited world (the *oikoumenē*) and entered into paradise after His death, as He had promised one of the two thieves at the crucifixion. After His resurrection, in returning to the inhabited world, He manifested the restored unity of the whole world [illegible] taking part in the life of His disciples, demonstrating that the world is one and not divided against itself, because it has kept the *logos* of its being free from the division founded on difference.[19] This He does of course also in hypostatic communion with Himself as the divine Logos. Thus, the theandric dimension is involved.

However, Maximus's consideration of this theme contains more than that, and when we consider the whole context, the whole theandric dimension appears much more clearly.

Two specific details should be mentioned: (a) an allegorical interpretation (coming from the tradition of Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, and others) of paradise as a *place of virtue*; and (b) an exegesis of Luke 23:43, which links the conversion of the good thief with the breakdown of the fatal dialectic between pleasure and pain—and also with the same conception of a paradise of virtues which is partially based on the same earlier tradition.

This can be explained in a very concrete way. Even in Origen the allegorical interpretation of paradise as one of

[18] *Quaest. Amb.* 41, *Patr. Gr.* 91, 1309 AB
[19] *Patr. Gr.* 91, 1309 B

the Lord does not amount to the Father, but the

in the use of the words in his contemporary and

nature in the created things, what is first

the order of things. This fact has an

[illegible] the contemplative ascent through what is in

[illegible] of the outside things of the

[illegible] the Lord

[illegible] the Father, what is first

[illegible] and

[illegible] and

[illegible] and

[illegible] the most essential love of the natural [illegible] by which [illegible] mediation brings [illegible] personal [illegible] and to the very [illegible] negative acts and negative of apophatic theology in the proper sense.

[illegible] Mystical Experience and Its Creation

[illegible] that man would never have been [illegible] to [illegible] [illegible] experience of his [illegible] [illegible] cannot be carried out unless a [illegible] [illegible] becomes [illegible] [illegible] there it is paradoxical [illegible] and [illegible] to the first four.

[illegible] mediation rests on a deference that separates the [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] does not mean that God [illegible] [illegible] in some way in regard to His essence and [illegible] qualities, there can only be complete ignorance [illegible] [illegible] of substance between God and [illegible] creation and, consequently, no common *logos* to be [illegible] in common.

The [illegible] and the [illegible] of our mediation with God is thus above [illegible] [illegible] expression of Maximus's very utterly [illegible] [illegible] seems to indicate a kind of *super* [illegible] that God possesses in anticipation his supreme union. Many have understood that by analogy there is a kind of [illegible] even for this mystery but what [illegible] [illegible] remains absolutely incomprehensible.

Yet it is revealed to us that Christ has truly effected that mediation on behalf of man exclusively by virtue of His [illegible] mode of existence and [illegible] [illegible] On behalf of man means here that it was effected from the point of view of the humanity of Christ through His ascension [illegible] its final stage) as man. For from the point of view of His divinity one must say that it was effected regardless of any temporal consideration. On the other hand the point is precisely this, that this mediation should be carried out as a supreme manifestation of the theandric reality Christ presented Himself as man before the throne of God when He [illegible] shed all that God had communicated us. this self [illegible] [illegible] the life's mediation."[1]

Christ's accession to the right hand of the Father is the basis of this mediation, but it cannot be manifested in any external way, as in the case of the earlier mediations.

Yet it is [illegible] consequence to the work [illegible] of man. Here Maximus is of the same opinion as Gregory of Nyssa this can only be realized [illegible] by."[2]

The unity between God and the creature becomes manifest by grace in love, an ecstatic charity or love that directs itself continually toward God and at the same time participates in the love of God, a mass stretching itself in [illegible] toward man and creation. The mystical union is a union [illegible] the supreme consummation of all the virtues [illegible] perfection of all knowledge. In the next chapter we [illegible] with Max's conception of [illegible] in another of its aspects the ethical and social implications."[3]

Finally, through this mediation in Christ man should [illegible] through a process of [illegible] *perichoresis*, analogous to that which takes place between the natures in Christ [illegible] and become all that God might be without however any ontological assimilation. He should receive [illegible] as a spiritual gift [illegible] ego being compenetrated by the gift of God some thought his ascension in Christ but it was God and man are united without confusion according to the model of the hypostatic union as conceived within the theological framework of Chalcedon.

But [illegible] there is no means that for Max was the theandric [illegible] never ceases to be applicable it covers the whole [illegible] man's existence and the whole of creation. Through the [illegible] [illegible] the cosmos has become theandric while remain-

[1] See text of *Ambigua* 41 (PG 91, 1312 A).

[2] On the [illegible] of charity in Maximus at this point, cf. J. M. Garrigues, [illegible]

[3] [illegible] has made this role of charity in Maximus' theology the [illegible] of his dissertation.

ing wholly a created world completely separate, ontologically of the uncreated reality of God.

We can conclude this chapter with a rather long quotation from [illegible] of Maximus the Confessor on the work of Christ in a cosmic perspective:

> As the all-wise Creator and Lord of His humanity He united in Himself, as it is written, all things in heaven and on earth. He was God the Father, He was Logos, in no way was He ever and ever be separated from the Father by anything, as much as in will and truth, He was united to Him. He did all that the Father of God had predestined that it should be done. And having contracted in the name of God the Father the whole through our nature and made mediator the power which was given to Him by nature for this purpose from the beginning. Thus He united first of all to Himself through removal of the differences between male and female that existing—instead of men and women, considered initially from the point of view of distinction simply as people and in truth, as human beings fittingly conformed to Him and carrying that image of His unique and entirely intact, which can in no way be affected by any symptoms of corruption. And with us and for us He embraced the whole creation through what is in the center the extremes as being part of Himself and He wrapped them around Himself, thereby united with one another Paradise and the inhabited world, heaven and earth, the sensible and the intelligible, having Himself like us a body and sensibility and soul and intellect. He recapitulated in Himself all beings showing that the whole creation is one as if it were also a man, achieved through the coming together of all its members, according to the unique simple undefined and uncircumscribed principle stating that the whole creation can have one and the same absolutely indistinguish-

able logos that of having the non-being before the beings.[11]

Christologically Maximus later sums up the whole passage in the following way:

> The wisdom of God the Father and His understanding is the Lord Jesus Christ, who through His wisdom keeps all the species together and through the understanding of His mind embraces all single beings subsumed under them, since He is their creator and surrounds them with His providence, bringing through Himself all that is separated into unity, calming all dissolving war among beings, and—as the Apostle says (Col 1:20)—uniting all in peace and friendship and unsplit harmony both in heaven and on earth.[12]

[11] [illegible] Man must at least indicate a possible context of the [illegible] who holds all creation together, thus shares the presumptions of [illegible] and having the source of its being in itself. *Amb.* 41, *PG* [illegible]

[12] *Amb.* 10:1 D

CHAPTER 5

The Natural-Social Dimension

The title of this chapter simply expresses the fact that social life and virtues are seen by Maximus in the light of the nature (*physis*) of man, the nature that is common to all men, and the principle of which (the *logos* of nature) excludes any split or separation within the individual or between different human beings. One could as well speak of an ontological dimension, since this is in fact the subject to be treated now. However, I prefer the reference to *physis*: the human nature of all men, ruled ontologically by its principle or idea (its *logos* or *logoi*), is the very basis of interhuman morality in Maximus.

Again the word "dimension" is important. It is not chosen at random. For Maximus morality and sociality are not isolated in his theological cosmos. They are precisely a dimension of life as a whole. The decisive proof of this is the supremacy of charity in his system, the charity or love in which the exercise of virtues culminates: that charity which is the final goal of the contemplative life of insight and also the consummation of the mystical life. For this reason I propose an analysis of the Maximian concept of charity or love in its relationship to vices and virtues and to the final goal of human life.[1]

We begin with an analysis of Maximus's reflections on

[1] The theme of this chapter is treated at greater length in L. Thunberg, *Man and the Cosmos*, pp. 443–510, and in the pertinent chapter in Walther Völker, *Maximus Confessor als Meister des geistlichen Lebens*, Wiesbaden 1965.

the conflict between the sinful life of man and God's dual commandment of love.

THE DUAL COMMANDMENT OF LOVE AND THE CRISIS OF THE PASSIONS IN MAN

Two remarks ought to be made at the outset. Maximus in his ascetic theology as in a number of aspects a successor to the tradition of Evagrius Ponticus. This means for example that he also accepted the hierarchy of eight capital vices, characteristic of the Evagrian system. This is an Eastern hierarchy which differs from the Western one: pride is not its starting point and rather its culmination. The Evagrian-Maximian hierarchy thus consists of eight vices in the following order: *gluttony, fornication, avarice, grief, wrath, listlessness, vainglory, pride*. Maximus also accepts the tradition which derives the hierarchy of the human soul from the distinction between the rational and the non-rational elements. And he combines the hierarchy of vices with the hierarchy of the soul in such a way that every vice is more or less related to one of the three elements. We can at least be certain that gluttony and fornication belong in the concupiscible element, wrath to the irascible and vainglory and pride to the rational element. In any case Maximus sees the virtues as positive substitutes for the vices in a Platonic sense. This means that they too belong more or less to the three elements in the human soul even though the hierarchy of virtues is never so strictly constructed as that of the vices.

But what is even more interesting: the hierarchy of vices is seen as a manifestation of disobedience vis à vis the dual commandment of love. This disobedience is called self-love (*philautia*) meaning egoism, while the use of virtues is seen as manifestation of charity.[1]

[1] A penetrating study of Maximus's psychological and spiritual remarkable insights of self-love and of its remedy is to be found in Irénée Hausherr S.J. *Philautie. De la tendresse pour soi à la charité selon Saint Maxime le Confesseur*. Rome 1952.

The life of vice according to Maximus is characterized by a self-moral disintegration. The different forms of the abuse of the natural faculties of man condition one another mutually and together destroy the positive unity of man as a composite being. No vice can satisfy man, and therefore it brings him in each case to other vices, and all the vices, especially those of the concupiscible and rational faculties, separate man from God, who is the final and integrating goal of human life. Through the vices man is also separated from his neighbor, especially through those which emanate from his irascible faculty. There are also, of course, a number of vices that are not mentioned in the hierarchy of the eight because those eight are particularly representative expressions of the various aspects of man's sinful attitude.

This disintegration of man and of humanity is contrary not only to the aim that God has placed before man. It is contrary also to the explicit double commandment of love that expresses this aim. For Maximus the monotonous perspective is thus naturally related to a view of egoism (*philautia*) which sees it as the mother of all the vices, since self-love is a rejection of the dual commandment and of the relations that constitute the true unity of man. In sinning the individual sinner establishes in himself what Maximus calls an evil *gnome*, i.e. a certain predisposition of his will and his aspirations. This has the following consequences. Linked to the dialectic of pleasure and pain, *philautia* generates a multitude of passions (see chapter 3 on the soteriological dimension) differentiated among themselves according to this dialectic, and thus dividing the unity of human nature into thousands of fragments. Nature is not completely destroyed, for its logos remains, but the outward manifestation of its unity is destroyed.

The vices cause these divisions not only within the individual in relation to the *logoi* of his nature and to the general aim of human nature as a whole but also between him and his neighbors, since all men participate in the same nature and are related to a unity guided by this principle and aim. In separating the individual from his brethren they also separate him from charity, for the function of charity con-

cides with the divine aim set before man. Separation from
exactly in this context means precisely this double separation
from the sensible and intelligible multiplicity of humanity. In
this sense love is also opposed to "the world" (1 John 2:15).
Christian ascetic writers, Maximus underlines again and
again, the danger inherent in this separation from charity
while at the same time stressing the uniting function of
charity itself.

[illegible] from God
with His creatures [illegible] from one's neighbor
[illegible]. The [illegible] this separation not
[illegible] Further
[illegible] are intimately related
[illegible] are related
[illegible] the commandments
[illegible] to the different
[illegible]

[illegible] says for example
that [illegible] and that love
for neighbor is opposed to anger, i.e. the passion emanating
[illegible]. We find a whole number of
[illegible] even gets the im-
[illegible] of the vices is not only
[illegible] links between the
vices but also [illegible] as the double aspect
[illegible] love.
[illegible] *philautia* as
[illegible]. The short article IV, 97 of the
same *Centuries* is very interesting in this respect. Here
Maximus writes: "Do not pursue and hate *your brothers*, for in so doing you hate and pursue God."[3]
Maximus sees love [illegible] the two aspects of self-
love [illegible] most [illegible] the weakest form
of pleasure to the greatest and to egoistic concern in
its most [illegible]. What [illegible] is applicable
to [illegible] environment and to man's relation to God.

We may thus conclude that for Maximus the trichotomist

[3]*Par. Gr.* 90, 1065 C.
[4]*Par. Gr.* 90, 1056 C.

analysis of the vices—and the vices of the rational element, of
course, also refer to our relational power. God is intimately
linked with the commandment of love. This also corresponds
with Maximus's insistence on self-love (*philautia*) as the
root of all the vices and his insistence on charity as the summit
of all the virtues. Man as microcosm reflects the whole created
world, visible and invisible. When he suffers himself to be
led by *philautia*, his microcosmic constitution brings him to
his own destruction. *Philautia* invites all the passions to exer-
cise their disintegrating role according to the different zones
of man's nature and of the cosmos, too, as the object of man's
selfish interest. But man's microcosmic constitution also keeps
him a function as mediator when charity in its two aspects
[illegible] charity unites all the virtues to exercise their
[illegible] of the different faculties of man conquering
the vices and utilizing them in a good cause.

Here the correspondence between the vices and the virtues is, of course, of special interest. So let us turn our attention to this problem for a moment.

CORRESPONDENCE AND NONCORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN VICES AND VIRTUES

If one compares the theological systems of Evagrius and
Maximus one is struck by a difference that concerns precisely
this question of the position of charity. To Evagrius charity
represents the culmination and end of the *vita practica*, but
he gives a more elevated position to advancement in knowl-
edge [illegible] to the *vita contemplativa*. For Maximus,
however, is higher than charity. In a wider sense charity
itself implies a presence to the *gnosis* of God over all other
forms [illegible] knowledge and at least man through his intellectual
activity [illegible] the way to the final communion with God. For
this reason Maximus does not establish so strict a hierarchy
of virtues as Evagrius does. In the case of the virtues there
exists no decisive and fatal dialectic as there is in the case
of the vices. It is the plenitude of the virtues that counts,
more than their mutual relations. Maximus accepts Evagrius's

all equal and is disposed equally towards all. For in him there is neither Greek nor Jew, neither male nor female, neither slave nor freeman, but everything and in all things Christ.[9]

Consequently Maximus cannot accept the position of [illegible] detachment does not demand the same degree of [illegible] every man. Maximus expresses the demand for equal [illegible] and his [illegible] fact that God is no respecter of persons [illegible] what detachment means even [illegible] requires is that of charity [illegible] detachment. We may thus conclude that [illegible] concept of detachment used by Maximus into a [illegible] in the activity of [illegible] the same reference between [illegible] state of charity as are levied [illegible] we must [illegible] a fundamental change from the [illegible] the most that is possible is to be [illegible] to maintain the calm of detachment in their regard."[11]

But [illegible] to the lower level. We have noted that [illegible] states that love is both good and [illegible] should be an imitation of God's. But the imitation of God is connected with our disposition of will in the same way that our [illegible] and [illegible] of our [illegible] does not mean escape of man that should be [illegible] and [illegible] even if it has to [illegible] and confession in communion [illegible] and man.

This [illegible] should be connected to the whole composite phenomenon of man, his sensitive and intellective

[9] [illegible] Pan. Gr. [illegible] by P. Sherwood.
[10] On the Evagrian and Maximian understanding of detachment, cf. Thunberg, [illegible].
[11] Maximus the [illegible] The Ascetic Life, p. 91.
[illegible] Pan. Gr. 91, 164 AB.

elements since only this totality is in accordance with the logos of human nature. Consequently detachment must be more than just emptiness. In its negative aspect it is absence of evil passion; in its positive aspect it is connected also with a good and active use of man's faculties in virtue of his divine image and in the service of charity. Maximus says that the [illegible] of detachment is a state in which the face of the [illegible] of man is elevated in glorification of God, [illegible] by a multitude and variety of virtues.[12]

We can now more easily understand why Maximus is [illegible] interested in establishing a naked equation of correspondences between vices and virtues as Evagrius does. Rather he insists on the positive functions of the different [illegible] of human soul as these may be developed in the [illegible] virtues.

[illegible] should take place in active charity and [illegible] we must now turn our attention more directly and precisely to the function of charity at the different levels of Christian life.

CHARITY: THE SUPREME FACTOR OF INTEGRATION

This problem contains several aspects. Let us concentrate on three of them: (a) charity as the source of all the virtues, (b) charity in its relation to faith and hope, and (c) the relationship between charity and knowledge (gnosis).

Charity as the Source of the Virtues

Consistently Maximus calls charity the most general of [illegible] of virtues. But what is more important, he demonstrates that the regards the relationship between charity and the virtues in a way different from that of Evagrius. In fact, he maintains that charity *possesses* or contains all the virtues. This means that in a certain sense, some of the

[12] [illegible] Pan. Gr. 90, 913 A.

more [illegible] virtues or [illegible] come to the fore since [illegible] charity [illegible] evaluation of the virtues, [illegible] expression [illegible] Maximus's [illegible] according to Maxi- [illegible] virtues nor the virtues [illegible] of the *vita practica*. We are thus confronted with an exclusive vision of charity as the perfection of virtues [illegible] Charity [illegible] the other virtues into a more elevated unity and sup- [illegible]

[illegible] expressions of man's [illegible] But charity is not [illegible] Maximus often [illegible] between [illegible] *agape* [illegible] a theandric reality. It is [illegible] can also lead man beyond him- [illegible] the summit of the virtues, stands [illegible] divine [illegible] human and at the same time the perfection of all that is [illegible]

[illegible] however [illegible] the [illegible] form of communion that [illegible] the divine grace that [illegible] communication [illegible]

[illegible] which manifests [illegible] elements of the human [illegible] between love of God and a good use

[illegible] Maximus [illegible] Garrigues, op. cit. pp. [illegible]
[illegible] according to Maximus [illegible]
[illegible] Garrigues [illegible] energy of love [illegible] op. cit. p. 188.

of man's concupiscible faculty is clearly expressed by Maximus. This is by the way one of the points where he comes close to St Augustine. The relationship between love of neighbor and the good use of man's irascible faculty is indicated even more often. We find a characteristic statement in *Centuries on Charity* I 66:

> The passions of the irascible part of the soul are naturally harder to oppose than those of the concupiscible. Therefore a better remedy against them was given by the Lord, the command of charity.[47]

Both [illegible] are certainly also combined, since God is love, and the demand for love is expressed in the *double* commandment. Thus Maximus writes in *Centuries on Charity* I 38:

> Long-suffering and kindness belong to charity; the [illegible] man and evil-doer is clearly made alien to charity, but being alien to charity is being alien to God, [illegible][48]

Man's rational faculty is also related to the work of charity; in the first place here we are dealing with love of God. The activity of the mind in pure prayer is also, according to Maximus, an expression of the love of God. Maximus [illegible] the man who loves God is concerned for pure prayer, and casts out of himself every passion that obstructs [illegible][49]

We have thus seen that in Maximus's opinion the supreme [illegible] integrates positively all the more "primitive" virtues, bringing them to their perfection. We have also [illegible] positive evaluation of the virtues in relation to [illegible] combined with Maximus's evaluation of charity [illegible] employing a good use of the three faculties [illegible] man in making it capable of final communion [illegible] God.

[47] Patr. Gr. 90, [illegible] C, trans. by Sherwood.
[48] Patr. Gr. 90, [illegible] B, trans. by Sherwood.
[49] [illegible] Centuries on Charity, Patr. Gr. 90, 976 A.
[50] Ibid. II [illegible] Patr. Gr. 90, 985 BC.

But this means further that Maximus does not share the opinion of an Evagrius that man leaves his passible functions behind (we has capacity for desire and engagement as a being of body and spiritual) during the process of deification and Christian perfection. Actually charity implies that this possibility will be restored from its perversion and transformed, and that it will accompany man through all his life as a movement of love. For this reason Maximus is prepared to see certain aspects of desire in the world is replaced by the good ones in the life to come and for all eternity.

What exactly is the relationship between charity and the other two "theological" virtues, faith and hope?

Charity—Faith—Hope

On the one hand Maximus affirms the supremacy of charity over the other "theological" virtues. This is no surprise. But there are in Maximus other more interesting traits.

A remarkable fact is his very high estimation of *faith*. Like Evagrius he sees faith as the basis and point of departure for the Christian life as a whole. But Maximus goes further. Faith is for him not simply a work of nature, a divine gift to the human soul. For Maximus faith is a grace even in baptism. A person receives from it knowledge of God and divine things. This knowledge is increased with sensual and external knowledge and is called "the Kingdom of God" (though the Kingdom itself is a divinely formed fact).[31] That is to say that formed faith must be filled with the virtues, but it is nevertheless always the Kingdom of God in man which as manifested takes shape through good works, as the quotation to this passage puts it.[32] Consequently we must regard the supremacy of charity as part of this high estimation of faith.

On *hope* too Maximus takes a position different from that of Evagrius. The latter sees its function in terms of assurance and confirmation, but Maximus goes further. To him hope is placed on a more elevated level, as the strength (*firmitudo*) of the other two. This means that the three "theological" virtues form a kind of divine triad where hope is found in the middle. They are all like fixed stars in a supreme formation.

This is confirmed by another of Maximus's considerations. He places these "theological" virtues in relation to one of his other favorite triads, *beginning—intermediary—end*. Faith is the beginning, and hope is the intermediary, but in fact their mutual relationship is more complicated than that. For Maximus believes that *faith*, being the beginning, is also linked to the intermediary and to the end. Man has always to begin over and over again, having no proper access to a perfect knowledge of divine things. *Hope* is related to the intermediary and to charity which represents the end. It has an intermediary function because it indicates the object of faith and manifests the object of charity. But *charity* alone is fully connected with the end as the consummation of all.

Charity is related to the end in the sense that it alone attains to the final object of true desire.[33] But it is also the repose (*stasis*) of man's movement even beyond himself. It therefore is the final point in the ancient Christian triad of Maximus (already spoken of above): becoming—motion—[illegible] (the *stasis*).

Let us quote a passage from *Letter 2* that illustrates this very well:

> Faith, which firmly establishes truth as the basis of that which comes afterwards. I mean hope and charity. Hope gives strength to the extremes, I mean all, and charity, showing in itself what is to be believed and what is to be loved, and teaching that the course to the goal should go through hope itself. Charity however is the fulfilment embracing entirely the supreme desirable in its totality and providing for them the rest of their movement towards it.[34]

[31] See *Quaestiones Thal.* 35 ed. Laga-Steel, p. 259.
[32] Ibid. p. 73.
[33] See *Letter 2*, *Patr. Gr.* 91, 396 C.
[34] *Patr. Gr.* 91, 396 B.

In accordance with this Maximus states that charity is the perfect end which faith and hope are striving to attain, while knowledge provides participation in divine supernatural things.[84] Charity alone can lead man to mystical union.

This statement is by no means however also calls attention to the problem of the relationship between charity and knowledge in Maximus's thought.

Knowledge and Charity

The [illegible] thought by charity in Maximus's spiritual anthropology knowledge is [illegible]. *Charity* I 100 is an important text at this point:

> Mind [illegible] desire seeks him [illegible] the ground of His being but finds no [illegible] to Him. For that mind which [illegible] when it has to every [illegible] been separated from His [illegible] and has [illegible] from His goodness and His love for mankind, which gives His [illegible]. And it [illegible] Him, [illegible] by [illegible] from [illegible]. Now [illegible] and the very fact of knowing [illegible] knowledge surpassing the mind, as the holy [illegible] and Denis have said somewhere.[85]

Here Maximus shows that knowledge even if it is placed [illegible] with this desire for Him [illegible] cannot penetrate into that which is God's own being because it is forbidden to every creature. Nevertheless it is [illegible] in the

[84] See *Centuries on Theology and Economy* I 98, p. 131.

[85] *Myst. Ep.* 90, 981 D-984 A.

divine attributes, i.e. in that which God reveals of Himself. We must observe that according to Maximus even the illuminated intelligence, in its pure desire of love for God, seeks something of God that it is not permitted to comprehend. In this same love it is yet given to man to be united with God. This union is thus above and beyond knowledge and [illegible].

In this way charity is in all respect superior. On its way [illegible] most perfect [illegible] being open to it, the soul should be supported by charity. From this point of view it may seem that charity, as the superior, substance and knowledge [illegible]. But this is only one aspect of a totality. The [illegible] and the support of charity precisely because charity is capable of being [illegible] beyond itself. In each text in which Maximus speaks [illegible] the exact context should be observed.

Charity is thus on the one hand a fruit of the purification of passions, which makes the soul (*psychē*) pure, and is something different from knowledge (*gnōsis*) which is [illegible] (*praxis*). On the other hand it is through charity that knowledge of God becomes attached to the [illegible]. It is charity that prepares the soul for its advancement in knowledge. Knowledge thus depends on charity, and this dependence never ceases. On the contrary it is charity alone, as we have seen, that opens the door to mystical union for man.

Generally one might say that Maximus emphasizes as [illegible] the gnostic character of human desire [illegible] (the man seeks to be a God). At the same time he stresses the fact that it is charity which leads man to true knowledge and illumination *and* that the knowledge of God can never be completed since what God is in Himself remains incomprehensible to man. Only [illegible] man's pure desire in perfect charity which [illegible] kind of ecstasy (*ekstasis* in a meaning man's [illegible] outside or beyond himself) unites man totally with God.[86]

[86] On this theme see further Thunberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 442-444 et also Völker, *op. cit.*, pp. 445-465.

We might thus add the following conclusion. Charity generously opens the natural social dimension in its totality. It is a double phenomenon in the same way as the commandment of love is double: it implies the perfect unification of man, who is naturally and positively human, as well as its transcendence going beyond this dimension as such. It is a mysteriously theandric reality: human desire and divine power united in the divine-human reciprocity that is the decisive perspective of creation as a human phenomenon. In virtue of this reciprocity charity leads and accompanies man on the whole road of salvation. But for this reason, too, the natural social dimension is itself a reflection, a perfect image of the creative "philanthropy" of God.

This last fact, however, is also illustrated in Maximus by his personal explanation of the divine incarnation or embodiment in human virtues themselves. Therefore this aspect must be the object of consideration in this chapter, since it is through it that the creative social dimension again obtains its own true content as divine image.

DIVINE EMBODIMENT IN HUMAN VIRTUES

Charity serves not only a unified movement toward God as the true goal of man, but also a good use of man's different human qualities and a just relationship between all men who share the same nature.

Maximus preserves a perfect equilibrium in establishing a true correspondence between the integrative function of charity as a unified movement toward God and the very act of self-orientation through which Christ the Logos allows Himself to become embodied in the multitude of human virtues.

The work of integration through which man can serve God is at the same time, in Maximus's opinion, a continual "incarnation" of the Logos in humanity, differentiating and concretizing, as it were, the divine presence according to the created diversity of human life. This idea is not unique to

Maximus, but he developed it in a more energetic way than did his predecessors.[28]

Maximus affirms that the Logos "becomes massive" in the man of the *vita practica* (*praktikós*) through the modes (*tropoi*) of the virtues that are active there and is incarnated in them; but also says that in the spiritual life of man He becomes "infant" as He was in the beginning, God the Logos.[29] There is thus a double movement (downward and upward, cf. Maximus's reflections on Christ's ascension). Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that Christ is also present in the ascetic virtues of the *vita practica*, an active participation underlining the important correspondence and connection between the divine incarnation and the continual human process of sanctification and deification.

As a matter of fact, Maximus's doctrine at this point is very advanced. First of all, the grace of baptism implies an [illegible] of Christ in the Christian. Secondly, faith becomes the mother of the Logos in man. The Logos is the son of faith in the sense that He incarnates Himself on the basis of it through practiced virtues.[30] It is in its capacity as the source of virtues that faith becomes the mother of the Logos. Maximus regards this presence as a kind of incarnation.

Further, according to Maximus, the purification of the passions prepares for the experience of a presence of Christ as reality; the Logos is present both through virtues and through knowledge. Substantially—and here Maximus is in accord with a number of his predecessors—the virtues are Christ, and this fact is explicitly understood as a divine incarnation in the virtuous life of man. There is also a link between this moral incarnation of Christ the Logos and the presence communicated through knowledge (*gnosis*), i.e. contemplation through reason and intellect. As a matter of fact, there is also a correspondence between the two manners of presence, for it is through the *logoi* of the commandments that the Logos communicates with man in the *vita practica*. In this

[28] See Thunberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 342–430.
[29] See *Cap. Gnost.* I, 48; *Patr. Gr.* 90, 1141 C.
[30] See *Quaest. ad Thal.* 40; *Patr. Gr.* 90, 400 BC.

same way as it is through the *logoi* of things as subjects of contemplation that He communicates in the process of generation. Those who keep the commandments are moralists in communion with the Logos, developing their natural virtues as Christian virtues. These virtues make sense precisely through the correspondence between the *logoi* of human nature in which they are natural virtues and the Logos Christ present in virtuous Christians.

However moral communion with the Logos is closely related to the intellectual comprehension of this principle of nature. Christ manifests Himself in the virtues of the believer, but the believer also elevates himself through contemplation and theology to a comprehension more elevated than that which undergirds his practice. Through understanding the principles and laws of the *logoi*, the Logos, and God Himself

We have seen that Maximus believes that Christ is present in our practice of virtue so that the human intellect, which is made in God's image in a moral sense, advances as it ascends (or is brought) to the knowledge of the divine mysteries. Precisely we see how divine attributes and human virtues (which are manifestations of the *logoi* in accordance with the will of human nature) correspond not only in the same sense as the incarnation of Christ and the deification of man correspond. The relationship between the virtues corresponding to the divine commandments, and the revealed attributes of God is modeled on the hypostatic relationship between the human and the divine in Christ.

This is precisely what Maximus affirms in *Letter 2* where he says that the loving charity permits a reciprocity and a communion between those who are being united, as God and man, in a communication (*communicatio idiomatum*) similar to that between the two natures in Christ. Maximus writes:

> For the most perfect work of charity and the culmination of its activity is to attain, through a reciprocal attribution, that the attributes of those whom it unites pass from one to the other, and likewise the names of these qualities, and that it makes man act and appear as God through the one and unchangeable decision and motion of will on both sides, such as we see it in Abraham and the other saints. And this is perhaps what is said about the person of God. In the hands of the prophets I have made myself similar {Hos. 12.10} to express how God, through the native practice of virtue, makes Himself conform with everyone due to His great love for human beings. For the hand of every man person is His various practice– in which and through which God receives likeness unto men.[4]

The [illegible] conversations of the Council of Chalcedon and [illegible] (of the years 451 and 553) are here translated [illegible] level of the virtues in the sense that human [illegible] and [illegible] action [illegible] through [illegible] correct [illegible] [illegible] as [illegible] is maintained and confessed to the same [illegible] human [illegible] differentiations are also maintained. [illegible] of divine [illegible] appropriation. The [illegible] and [illegible] dimension is thus not neglected but affirmed [illegible] in the relationship in which it is transcended. [illegible] characteristic of Maximus.

[illegible] to forget the social aspect of this dimension, however. In reference to this Maximus's admirable skill in [illegible] things together in his vision, let us end this [illegible] another quotation, one dealing with love for [illegible] neighbor. It is taken from *Liber Asceticus* 8:

> For those who are created after the image of God and are motivated by reason (*logos*), with reference to man as a rational being, but through this also to the [*logoi* of his nature (common to all mankind)] who are [illegible] worthy of knowledge of God and receive [illegible] from Him, it is possible not to repulse those who cause them grief and to love those who hate them. Hence when the Lord says "Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you," he does not command

the impossible but clearly what is possible, for He wishes not otherwise to take the transgressor. The Lord himself makes it clear as he has shown it to us by His very works. It was because of His goodness, who strove to secure for those who were not there, but since we are lovers of material things and by nature preferring them above the spiritual ones, we are not then able to love Him who have not seen, as Paul said that he was [illegible]. But what is why not being able to see Him with the eyes of the flesh, we are likewise unable to know Him by love so that we might receive strength.

We find that text a number of the ingredients of Maximus's thought, as we have dealt with them in this chapter: a reference to the correspondence between the divine nature and man; the Pauline emphasis on the connection between the two sides of the commandment of love; stress on Christ as a model; a contemplation of virtue as the knowledge of God; and the whole being expressions of gratitude for

CHAPTER 6

The Liturgical and Sacramental Dimension

[illegible] of the different dimensions of Maximus's theology. It is in fact with [illegible] the ecclesiology of Maximus, with some exceptions, is in principle of a liturgical and sacramental nature. And [illegible] important [illegible] ecclesiology is for him more a dimension than a developed theme of theology (this may be due to his being a layman—a historical problem not yet solved); at any rate it includes, and is dominated by, his understanding of the liturgy and the sacraments.

To Maximus the Church is not an ecclesiastical institution distributing divine grace but truly a Mystery that represents symbolically the whole divine-human mystery, the whole mystery of God's good counsel and the economy of salvation. One might even say that ecclesiology in this sense is not only one of the dimensions but *the supreme* dimension. It contains the total vision of Maximus, a vision that is at once liturgical and sacramental at the same time. It was no accident that Hans Urs von Balthasar devoted his great study of Maximus *The Cosmic Liturgy*.

It is expressly in the *Mystagogia* (a work whose date is uncertain but which probably dates from Maximus's stay in Carthage since in its ascetical and exegetical aspects it comes close to the *Letter to Thalassius* and the *Questions to Thalassius*) that Maximus develops his mystical ecclesiology. It is characteristic that he does this in a piece that is formally an

explanation of the [illegible] [illegible] the human [illegible] [illegible] beyond [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] elevated mysteries, to the very goal of our spiritual life.

[illegible] Maximus [illegible] may explain his silence [illegible] [illegible] elements of the liturgy that were open to any [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] in the following way:

> As a [illegible] of everything the [illegible] of the mystery [illegible] and renders those who participate worthy through grace

> and participation, similar to the Good which is the Cause. They lack nothing [illegible] as it is attainable and possible to attain for men. In this way they may both be and be called gods [illegible] grace since God as a whole [illegible] them entirely and does not let any part of them be empty of His presence.[illegible]

[illegible] an observation of Fr. René Bornert might be [illegible] Maximus, even though [illegible] the terms *typikos* (by type) and *mystikos* [illegible] with the terms *genikos* (in general) and [illegible] (in particular) [illegible] explanation of Fr. Bornert is the following: "The general [illegible] of salvation, dealing with humanity as a totality, [illegible] through the [illegible] of the liturgical celebration a particular and special history concerning each member of the people of God." If this observation is [illegible] between what is general [illegible] total [illegible] the eucharistic liturgy offers and [illegible] Maximus [illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] and, [illegible] It would now [illegible] any grave tension between what is general and what is individual. The [illegible] of the [illegible] of man [illegible] and cannot be otherwise.

[illegible] Maximus wrote his commentary on the liturgy as a [illegible] as a disciple [illegible] [illegible] experience. All his [illegible] traditions are not [illegible] detailed, but [illegible] seem to be more important than the others [illegible] the Areopagite (whose [illegible])

[illegible]

[illegible]

THE CHURCH AS A FIGURE OF GOD

as its fundamental basis.

This unity was accomplished by God in regard to the essences of beings without confusion, in bringing into existence and sameness what there was of difference as has been demonstrated, through their tendency toward Him and their relation with Him as Cause and Ground and Goal.[6]

The same text, or rather an earlier section of the same chapter, also describes the Christ-likeness of the Church:

That is [the Church] comes as a grace in equal manner and adapted to same and to all persons that of being and being named from Christ.

It gives them a single and unique spiritual faith which is always and undivided and without the differences between them with respect to greater and lesser and which are impossible to count, not even taking notice of their existence at all does so by bringing all and uniting all in itself in a "catholic" way.[7]

There are, however, another aspect of the Church too and it is to these two aspects and the chapters of the *Mystagogia*.

THE CHURCH AS AN IMAGE OF THE WORLD

In the understanding of the broader dimension we noticed that one of the necessary acts of man and of Christ as his representative was the fourth mediation, that between sensible and intelligible creation. We have also seen that in Maximus's thinking the most specific situation of man is precisely based on the fact that he is one as by constitution both a sensible and intellectual being at the same time. This duality without a solution(!) of creation is the dominant aspect in the second chapter of the *Mystagogia*. The third

[6]*Myst.* 1 *Patr. Gr.* 91, 668 BC.
[7]*Patr. Gr.* 91, 669 CD

chapter considers the meaning of the Church as visible and sensible creation.

To better understand what Maximus wants to say on this subject, we should repeat the most essential points of his thought on the fourth mediation. First of all, we must not forget that the two forms of human life are, in Maximus's opinion, both of them, truly created forms. Second, this mediation was effected by Christ in His ascension through the angelic orders as true man, in soul and in body. Third, through this act Christ reveals a tendency that is common to the whole of creation, viz. to become coordinated in a non-divided totality. Fourth, this revelation implies that there is in fact one common *logos* for the whole of creation and finally that man should carry this mediation out through a knowledge similar to that of the angels. All these themes now represent the background for what Maximus says in the *Mystagogia*.

Yet, first he reflects on the Church as a particular building when he says that it constitutes an image of this dual world.

> It is divided into a separated space, reserved for the priests and liturgical servants alone which we call the sanctuary, and a space which is accessible to all believing people, which we name the nave. Yet it is one according to *hypostasis*.[8]

Here we are confronted with a very simple kind of symbolism but there is more to say for already the division described is a division on two levels, that of Church architecture and that of liturgical ministers and actions. As a division it is precisely of an exterior and architectural character but as a dual unity the Church also becomes manifest in its human and liturgical reality. We already know—and Maximus has underlined this in his first chapter—that the Church as a people constitutes a unity. Peopled by the Christians as a Eucharistic body the Church building itself expresses its unity, and this unity is confirmed by the liturgy. This latter is also [illegible] in a hierarchical sense, but the whole cele-

[8]*Patr. Gr.* 91, 668 D

brating people celebrate it together. This in itself indicates precisely the tendency in creation which was revealed by Christ in the fourth incarnation: a tendency that is confirmed by the unity of the theandric *hypostasis*. The word *hypostasis* in our quotation (which as to its subject is not yet christological) reminds us of that.

The text can be properly interpreted only through a correct apprehension of what man is. Chapter 2 is complemented by Chapter One. Maximus draws attention to the fact that God has placed man in the created world and thus reflects the order of its creation. The wisdom of men who are ignorant of God is not condemned. Men may get to know the world in a way that corresponds to their own dignity as rational beings. The senses and intelligence are not to be despised. Even the senses experience may be used [illegible] All of the senses experience may be used [illegible] about all that [illegible] concerns the [illegible] Also [illegible] one may get [illegible] through [illegible] expressions [illegible] communication between the *logoi* of [illegible] with the [illegible] things that [illegible] For human [illegible] at one and the same [illegible] interpretation of the same visible and invisible [illegible] Beauty and [illegible] a separation but also a parallelism within creation.

In the same way in the church one may [illegible] the spiritual truths both symbolically through the [illegible] of the liturgical action and at the same time through direct communion at the altar. (On the problem of communion and real presence see below, the Appendix.) The reality is the same and comprehended in this way it also indirectly reflects the Church in heaven.

We may sum up with two quotations. The first one concerns contemplation and the second one indirect cosmic relationship with divine realities. On symbolic contemplation Maximus seems to say that it is only secondary to pure contemplation which does not pass through sensible visualizations, since that has, as it were, immediate access to the *logoi*

of things. Nevertheless, symbolic contemplation is a proper contemplation. Maximus expresses it in a very sophisticated way:

> Symbolic contemplation of intelligible things through the visible is a spiritual understanding and insight of visible things through the invisible.[1]

Thus it is no surprise that the Church, while being an image of the world, yet seen from above or from the interior, also gives an indication of the heavenly reality and its liturgical celebration. Maximus says:

> It is another kind of Church, not made by hands which is wisely revealed by that which is made by hands and which possesses in the form of sanctuary the superior world attributed to the powers above, and as nave the one below reserved for those who participate in sensible life.[2]

In this text Maximus adds without committing himself to any other possible symbolism the Church is also an image of the sensible world as such. Here however the symbolism is not liturgical. The Church as world has its sanctuary as heaven and its nave as earth, but one may also say that the world is a church having heaven as its sanctuary and earth as its nave. This means that what really concerns Maximus is the sacramentality of an ecclesial vision of the world. The world is a church and this fact implies by consequence the possibility of the first symbolism: the relationship of the Church with the world as both sensible and intelligible. Thus in Maximus the Church is never separated from the world as cosmos. It represents it and includes it through its own constitution as a building and its own activity as people of God, its symbolism being a reflection of a double reality in which it participates: the purpose of which it communicates as a spiritual reality in Christ.

[1] [illegible] *Patr. Gr.* 91, 669 CD.
[2] [illegible] 669 AB.

But thereby a road is open to further symbolism, which is directly anthropological and this is what concerns Maximus in chapter 5 of his *Mystagogy*.[4]

THE CHURCH AS MAN AND MAN AS CHURCH

Here two points is presented at the very outset: Man and Church relate and synthesize each other reciprocally. Maximus's method of interpretation is more clearly exegetical than it is in chapter 2.

Here the Pauline terminology (St. Paul speaks of man as consisting of body, soul and spirit) is also observed in the system of correspondences that he sets forth: man as a human being is now seen as divided into three parts corresponding according to their sacredness to the sanctuary, the altar, and the holy of holies. But with a significant shift of emphasis Maximus places the correspondences between them the other way around: the altar reflects man in his essential nature as he is created and represents the soul; man is in fact a church in the world, and the church a universal Man, what Maximus calls the *makranthropos*.

Correspondingly in Maximus's view around man, as the microcosmic center of creation and the key to its interpretation, three are gathered as the created realities anthropologically organized to be the Church of God. But man as the key symbol represents the primordial universe, he is the model for what is human, making the realities around him bring them to their true realization through being in the image and likeness of God. For this reason the Church as man (anthropologically interpreted) is built the image and likeness of God. Maximus writes: "The Church] is in the image and likeness of man created in the image and likeness of God."[5]

The correspondences can thus occur on a spiritual scheme in which all the stages of Christian life are carried out. Maximus continues:

[4] *PG* 91, 668 B

man is a mystical church. Through his body as nave he assumes the practical life of his soul through the energies of the commandments in accordance with the moral philosophy; through the sanctuary of his soul he brings to God through natural contemplation and reason the sensible region as purely detached in the spirit from matter, and through the altar of his spirit he invokes the silence full of hymns of praise, [as] the invisible and unknown great voice of Divinity . . .[6]

What is to be noted, however, in Maximus's description of the Church as an image of the soul, considered in itself, which we find in chapter 5 of the *Mystagogy*:

THE CHURCH AS AN IMAGE OF THE HUMAN SOUL

Chapter 5 of the *Mystagogy* is comparatively long. The reason for this is that Maximus obviously had the intention of presenting a whole psychology of his own. One might ask whether it does not go beyond the scope of his theme, but even if we consider it a digression from the main line of his argument, we should notice the significance of the analogy that he wants to establish. What particular aspect of his ecclesiology is it that he wants to underline here? This is, after all, relatively clear. As Fr. Riou has well expressed it, the significance is that the Church "realizes in its parts the same unification that the soul exerts in its various faculties."[7]

Our main interest here is therefore not to enter into the psychological details but to present an understanding of the basic tendencies and principles of Maximus's psychology. Here follows a summary of important aspects.

One most essential thing is of course the fundamental dichotomy in man: he is at the same time an intelligible and a sensible being. This fact has a decisive influence on the

[5] *PG* 91, 668 BC
[6] *PG* 91, 669 A

soul, which is situated in between the two extremes. As a [illegible] the soul is characterized by its [illegible] and [illegible] the external world and [illegible] them [illegible] an image of the world, but [illegible] through its natural [illegible]. It is not disturbed by [illegible] things, the [illegible] (*logoi*) of things and is thus capable of [illegible] them a more accurate image of the world.

These two kinds of [illegible] however represent one and [illegible] Maximus [illegible] between the [illegible]

[illegible]

the Church as soul.

[illegible] the soul, the [illegible] and the intellectual power, should both be [illegible] through [illegible] The [illegible] movements of the soul [illegible] God. [illegible] divide the human [illegible] in order to [illegible] the image and likeness of God in the [illegible] practical and the [illegible] contemplative [illegible] as parallel expressions of man as being organized and [illegible] according to his nature [illegible] the [illegible] of that which is man expresses itself according to its divine principle (*logos*).

In the chapter [illegible] of the *Mystagogy* Maximus emphasizes especially the [illegible] movements of the mind (*nous*) and reason ([illegible] in its [illegible] sense). The mind (*nous*) directs the gnostic activity of man whose goal is truth, giving him access to true spiritual goods. At the same time reason

[footnote marker illegible] See ed. Lago-Steel, p. 273.

[illegible] of the *practical life*, the end of which is [illegible] the basis of faith. Here finally [illegible] of the Church. Maximus again calls our [illegible] of the Church dividing into sanctuary [illegible] representing the duality of the human soul.

[illegible] presented in the form of a quotation [illegible] the *Mystagogy* [illegible] explaining [illegible] of Maximus's ecclesiology. For [illegible] have one and the same goal. The [illegible] in the common human [illegible] is responsible for [illegible] fact, the two realities [illegible] is a Church and the Church is a man.

[illegible] has been said, the parts of the soul [illegible] possesses wisdom from [illegible] at [illegible] from that to [illegible] (*gnosis*) from [illegible] the unforgettable [illegible] through that it [illegible] the truth [illegible] the end and the goal of [illegible] the good things of the [illegible] its reason [illegible] possesses prudence, from that it arrives at practice, and from practice [illegible] and from that again to faith, according to which it reposes in the good as the blessed end of all reasonable activities. Through them the understanding of divine things is put together according [illegible] the coming together in the union of these things in relation to one another [illegible] to all these things that the Church adapts itself clearly, being compared [illegible] soul in contemplation. Through the sanctuary [illegible] that manifests itself in the mind and [illegible] Through the nave [illegible] makes [illegible] the things which appear according to reason [illegible] of reason. And it brings all to its fulfilment [illegible] of the divine [illegible] All that can be ex[illegible] through what is being performed in the [illegible] quite clear that man's own soul is [illegible] a Church and divine. It may be because of this [illegible] the Church which is made by hands, on account of the variety of divine things in it [illegible] a symbolic

model and has been given to us as a guide toward the excellent good.[13]

As we notice the Church as an image of the created world can only point through its symbolism to the ultimate truth, since this truth is found in mystical union beyond all mediated knowledge. But the Church also undoubtedly opens up the final route to this union since it is the place where the deifying grace of God is at work among men. For as Maximus expressed it in chapter 4 of his *Mystagogia*: the Church is a spiritual man and man is a mystical Church.[14]

At this point then the rites of the eucharist in its proper sense also have an important role to play as an indication of the consummation that is to come. In chapter 16 of the *Mystagogia* Maximus says for example that the Great Entry with the eucharistic gifts begins and inaugurates the future glorious appearance of the Mystery of our salvation which is hidden in the most profound divine secrecy,[15] and in chapter 17 he says that the kiss of peace prefigures and describes both the future reconciliation of all rational beings in the one Logos "[16] and more generally as Fr. Bloom points out "in the communion, the summit of the liturgy and of the mystical life that we find a profoundly mystical and not only an eschatological and representative preoccupation with things divine. Holy communion is thus conceived as a sacramental integration of the whole human person before and toward its final and ultimate goal which is the Trinitarian God Himself, the image and likeness of whom it arises and manifests. To this last aspect we shall return in more detail in the Appendix.

Thus we may conclude that Maximus sees the Church (as building and as people) both in a symbolical and a realistic perspective and that for him there is no decisive tension between these two perspectives. The same observation can be made regarding the sacraments. They are symbols, and as

[13] *Pater.* 9 *PG* 91.684 A.
[14] *Myst.* 684 A.
[15] *Myst.* 6 *PG* 92.664 C.
[16] *Op. cit.* p. 36.

such they may be allegorically interpreted, but they are also a reality that transforms the life of Christians through divine grace. This all depends on Maximus's understanding of the created world. That understanding can best be termed a sacramental one. On account of the presence of the Logos in all things, holding their *logoi* together, the world is pregnant with divine reality and knowledge of it through the rational quest of man has its own *logos* — is itself a kind of communion with and a participation in divine things through the aims and purposes that are recognized in creation.

What happens in the Divine Liturgy is both symbol and reality at the same time. The liturgical acts have—precisely as symbols—a representative character, they participate in the divine reality as secrets and mysteries to be interpreted by the believer's mind. The liturgical sharing in these divine things also prefigures and represents the ongoing, and possible, divinization of man.

A quotation from chapter 23 of the *Mystagogia* may illustrate this:

> Having received—in a dignity like unto that of the angels—the human *logoi* concerning Divinity as far as they are accessible to creation, and having learned to laud the unique Divinity without ever ceasing in science and in symphony with the angels, in a trinitarian manner, the soul is brought through close assimilation into the fixation of grace. Through that, and in a manner of its prayer, its God as the unique mystical Father according to grace, it will gather itself together through an ecstasy outside of everything toward the One who is its secrecy. It will sense and know all the more the divine mysteries as it will not be of itself nor be known itself through itself or by another person but received by the entire God who brings it entirely to the good entirely present in it in a divine manner and penetrating into it without passion deifying it entirely. In this way, as the totally saintly Dionysius the Areopagite says, it becomes the icon and the manifestation of invisible light, an immaculate

[illegible] complete emasculate un-
[illegible] ed reasoning [illegible] enter the secret
dot of the [illegible] of Goodness and nothing is a god or
manner [illegible] as far as it is possible
the goodness [illegible] inaccessible places.

In some [illegible] Maximus comments
[illegible] to the Cross as he sees it as a
[illegible] the scriptural [illegible] Maximus [illegible] with the interpretation of the
[illegible] connected with the Sabbath's rest of
[illegible] heavenly [illegible] that
[illegible] the [illegible] of a [illegible] have
[illegible] and [illegible] substance
[illegible] of [illegible]

[illegible] of [illegible] rejected the mass
[*stigmata*] of sin through practice

[illegible] energy toward the
[illegible]
[illegible]
entirely attached to God alone through an [illegible] of
[illegible] of [illegible] to God
through mystical theology

40. Circumcision is the putting away of the tendency
[illegible]

1 The circumcision is the [illegible] and [illegible]
[illegible] movements of the soul in relation to
the future

42 The harvest is for the rational soul the gathering

[illegible] Par. Gr. 91, 701 BC. the translation is [illegible] by the
[illegible]

together and the understanding with insight of the
[illegible] principles [i.e.] as to virtue and na-
ture

43 The harvest of harvests is the comprehension of
God [illegible] to all beyond the material contem-
[illegible] things, in a manner inaccessible
[illegible]

[illegible] a spiritual interpretation both of Scripture and of
[illegible] man on his spiritual journey may thus according
Maximus [illegible] access to a deeper communication with
[illegible] both the Creator of all that is and the hidden
[illegible] in the mind when it embarks upon an
[illegible] beyond itself.

[illegible] the other dimensions that we have considered, the
[illegible] sacramental dimension is, as a matter of fact
[illegible] dimension of life as a whole and cannot be neglected
[illegible] Christian. At the same time Maximus continues in a
[illegible] which is destined to see sacraments, the
[illegible] of ascetic and spiritual life rather than as
[illegible] and end-point. In Maximus's mind monastic life
[illegible] of spiritual development and perfection
is always present, seeking its symbolic expressiveness in sacra-
mental and liturgical reality.

[illegible] Cf. also [illegible] A

CHAPTER 7

Further Reflections on Maximus's Theology

In the preceding chapters we have described the theology of Maximus the Confessor in terms of various dimensions. Through this method some elements have been treated at certain length and in some detail while other elements have had to be left out. One such neglected field is Maximus's christology, considered in its more detailed points of view and another is his mystical theology which we have only hinted at.

This final chapter—and also the Appendix—has the function of supplementing at certain points what has been already considered. This does not mean that it will give a summary. Nor does it mean that the relevance of Maximus's theology for today will be adequately treated. My intention in this chapter is more limited. All readings and all interpretations of texts from the early Church demand a hermeneutical attitude that is always open to dialogue between these writers and the problems and questions put to us today. For this purpose both distance and proximity are important. The five immersion chapters above might have given enough proximity to allow a certain distance to mark out the profile of Maximus within a wider tradition of theology and in relation to the questions of our time.

The reflections that I propose here thus emerge from my many years of reading Maximus. I will concentrate my attention on three basic themes, mutually interrelated and yet,

each of them rightfully claiming attention in itself. These reflections are of a somewhat personal character.

The first problem concerns the ontological perspective in Maximus' vision. His reflections on the principles (*logoi*) of creation as seen in relation to some observations on the natural sciences of our own time. The second problem is that of the relationship between Maximus's theology and Eastern Orthodox Palamism (the tradition stemming from Gregory Palamas) as seen as an occasion to examine the dialogue between the churches of East and West. The last problem is that of Maximus's eschatology: what did Maximus think about the end of time and about eternal life, and what can we learn today from his manner of resolving these intricate problems?

THE PRINCIPLES OR IDEAS OF CREATION AND NATURAL SCIENCE TODAY

Before Maximus Christian thought about the Logos and the Logoi of things had acquired a history of its own. The christological problems that had arisen in the ancient Church, especially in the theology of Alexandria, and not only in explicitly Origenist circles, had led to a condemnation of Stoic or gnostic tendencies to find in the person of Christ the principle of the cosmos. It was almost impossible to find positive theology in Philo of Alexandria, even though some of the early Christian writers did get their ideas from him at certain points. The Christian conviction that the identification of Jesus Christ with the Logos would imply a more elevated evaluation of Christ than what Philo's thought would suggest was the main reason for this divergence. For as a matter of fact Philo did not consider the Logos as divine in the proper sense of the word, or at least only in a primary phase while in a secondary phase He was created by God.[1]

A number of ancient Christian writers however made use of the Philonian understanding of the Logos as the ideal and true center of the intelligible world. This corresponds

[1] On Philo's speculations see e.g. Jean Daniélou, *Philon d'Alexandrie*, Paris, 1958.

to a totality of ideas in a Platonic sense, but there is a difference. Philo as a Jew sees the Logos in terms of a personal Deity, and thus the coming together of all the ideas in the Logos means their coming together in God. But what is the relationship between God and His Logos as the principle of the created world? Here is the point where the Christian writers claimed that they had another answer than that of Philo, thanks to their Trinitarian theology. The Logos as the Second Person in the Godhead holds all things together in Himself. All that is created is created according to divine intention, the subject of which is the personal Logos, who entered this world in history and became man to fulfill the purpose of creation and of man as its microcosm. This at least is the line of thinking that Maximus follows. But this means, then, that the whole creation is filled with the divine presence. This is a presence that is not only of an abiding quality but also has a purpose and an aim to be carried out through man's free acceptance of it.

In general, the ancient writers also had the conviction that—thanks to the decisive act of creation—this world of ideas, aims, purposes, and principles is present in the concrete and observable world of creation. Through Christ the Logos, this world, not only as an intelligible world but also, of course, as a sensible world, was in their view related to God through its capacity of being the outward manifestation of His own wisdom. Through this very qualified Christian adaptation of the Philonian identification between the Logos and the Platonic world of ideas, the Fathers of the Church were able to arrive at an evaluation of creation that was a combination of the Biblical view of God's creation and Hellenistic speculation, a view open to the understanding of Christ as the Mediator of the universe. Because of this the theological understanding of the world was from then on linked by necessity to the development of the central doctrines of christology.

It is precisely at this point that we meet Maximus. His presentation about the created world represents an advance in the theological reflection on the created order. Of his predecessors Origen was the first to develop a kind of theology of the Logoi of creation. We might notice a similar trend in St.

[illegible] for that matter, also in St Augustine. For the latter the rationes (the Latin translation of *logoi*) are the ideas which are contained together in the Logos.

[illegible] Maximus' theology. Maximus' thought is centred on Christ, who is the key to the whole. Maximus is convinced that he would never repeat Origen's mistakes because the Christ-event is the key to all reality. Christ is the centre of history and of the cosmos. He is the Logos who is the principle of creation and the goal of all things. He is the Logos who was made flesh in Jesus of Nazareth. Between these two poles of the incarnation of the Logos, Maximus' theology of history and of the cosmos is developed. Christ is the centre of history because he is the Logos who was made flesh in Jesus of Nazareth. He is the centre of the cosmos because he is the Logos who was made flesh in Jesus of Nazareth. He is the centre of history and of the cosmos because he is the Logos who was made flesh in Jesus of Nazareth.

[illegible] concerned with their possible form of existence [illegible] Maximus [illegible] the creation [illegible] the divine [illegible] myth about a pre-historical fall is ruled out. For Maximus judgment with its inherent *logos*, which is the [illegible]

[illegible] violence to individuality and multiplicity [illegible] relation to the Maximian act of divine condescension is interpreted in terms of the incarnation of the Logos, introducing a positive current of movement into all beings since their creation but imprisoned and perverted by sin. In this way creation remains good also related to Christ as the Logos, the principle of [illegible]. But it is also, at the same time, into pursuit without a perspective of salvation and of reconciliation through the Logos. Faith in the Christ of the Cross and of the Resurrection protects us from false optimism and despair. It is only in the light of the Christ of the Cross and of the Resurrection that we can see the world as it really is, at all times, held together through a different *logos* by the Logos [illegible] divine love and judgment.

But do these speculations about the *logoi* of creation and their relationship to the Logos have relevance today? How would the interpretation of this world help us to a valid understanding of creation in our time? From my perspective two [illegible] of these problems seems to me to be found in the post-conference lecture Bonhoeffer addressed to his disciples about the real presence of Christ in the eucharistic gathering. What he called the *ubiquity* (i.e. the all-presence) of the risen one in the created order, a presence due to the fact that the human nature shares the qualities of His divine nature and yet delivers Him at the same time to the limitations of the earthly world, is really present in the bread and wine but [illegible] as a sacramental one. It is self-delivering and [illegible] and yet rests upon the relation that is already [illegible] between the human and divine nature in Christ, as it was once declared at Chalcedon.

First of all, we ought ask what the specific difference of Maximus was when he developed [illegible] thought in this way. As for Luther in his time, I had stated up to the point [illegible] Man is not without constant communion with God and the world is never communion as Christ incarnate. Maximus does not only consider the eucharist in this context but in four several ways of communion are opened up

in Christ as the Logos. Through the contemplation of the *logoi* of creation the soul enters into mystical communion with the Logos who gives Himself to it there in virtue of His primary inhabitation in the *logoi* of created beings. And this communion has an intermediary value on the way to mystical communion with God Himself. Through an interior prayerful comprehension of the whole of creation via the principles (*logoi*) of their being, which are also the principles of their ultimate end, the human soul becomes christified and prepares itself for the mystical union with the very Sun of this sovereign Principle of all that is.

This communion through the contemplation of the human mind of the *logoi* of the whole reality pushed through the *via negativa* is not of a merely material character in a gross sense. The contemplative concerns the creation as it were from above or from within and not through its external sensible impressions. The way of looking at creation may seem to us, living in a culture marked by empirical research, not only strange but even misleading if compared with a modern scientific attitude which considers us to start with facts and experiments, and is well conscious of all being measured and controlled by mental patterns. Yet if we reflect a little more profoundly we may ask whether this difference of approach is not of a rather superficial character. For what is characteristic of a modern and truly scientific view of nature is that we are dealing not with the materialities of a more ancient kind of science but with very remote factors which are hard to define without access to the language of symbols and images, e.g. with the very subtle elements of the atoms and even electronic tensions. Even more important: these elements that form the substance of the material world are often only observable in their effects, and are only describable through very abstract formulas, or as we said, through more or less symbolic images.

Of course these formulas and symbols reflect as much the rationality of man comprehending them as the structure of the world itself. It is thus through the concepts of human rationality—a rationality that is more than rational in a restricted sense, but must also have access to its speculative power of symbolization—and through them alone that we may get access to a kind of totality of truth about the world in which we live. In addition to that, it remains a fact that it is only through faith in the image of God in man, theologically speaking, that we could also find an indication of the divine intention behind creation and of our being placed within it.

In this situation, with due consideration given to what is characteristic of the way in which we approach creation and nature in our time, it seems to me that Maximus's speculations about the *logoi* come close to us, rather than separating him from us. He might be of help in interpreting this situation in a Christian way, i.e. in its relationship to Christ the Creator and the Consummator. The speculations of a Pierre Teilhard de Chardin on the evolution of the world toward the *Omega* point also seem to have a certain affinity to those of Maximus. This is the case not least in regard to their common positive evaluation of *movement* as a creative force, although Teilhard, of course, sees things in a more decidedly historical and evolutionary perspective.

MAXIMUS AND THE ROLE OF THE UNCREATED ENERGIES IN PALAMISM

This second subtheme is closely related to the first one. There is obviously a line of development that unites Maximus with Gregory Palamas and the whole Eastern tradition of thinking that emanates from him. In an excellent way John Meyendorff has analyzed the thinking of Gregory, this 14th century Byzantine saint and theological spokesman for the piety of Mount Athos, and also demonstrated its relevance far beyond his own time through his doctrine of the uncreated energies, a doctrine which in many ways parallels the Western Thomist doctrine of the analogy of being (*analogia entis*). Now Maximus in his speculations about the *logoi* of creation establishes himself in a universal perspective as a forerunner of Gregory Palamas, since the *logoi*

must be interpreted although Maximus himself did not do so in any explicit way as does Gregory Palamas in a Platonic sense[4]

What can one say with certainty about Maximus's conception of the relationship between God the Logos and the concrete world in its manifestations We have a transcendent of enjoyment are they created or uncreated The answer must be a double one On the one hand Maximus affirms that the logoi are pre existent in God's mind while on the other he also says that God brought them into the concrete reality created by the logoi of the Logos and the interaction between God and the Logos is a personal one where they are [illegible] and freedom Nevertheless this pre-existence does not create an [illegible] between God's thought and His creative act but rather a presence of the divine wisdom and providence in the nature and species And as such this pre-existence of the logoi in God as well as their existence in the created order is the result of God's free will Yet they are certainly not [illegible] created or part of the created order in the sense that they are one and by its material appearance or actual reality

According to Maximus the logoi are distinct energies but not in the Palamite sense And further does this mean that they are separate from the essence of God The answer to this question cannot be a definitive one should be presented step by step

The first question manifests the possibility of a certain tension between the absolute unity of the living Essence and the multiplicity of God's intentions (uncreated) Regarding the logoi as such however one cannot point to any tension It is rather a matter of a certain distinction It is God who preserves the logoi in their unity but they are nevertheless fixed in them such as they are in Maximus's view The natural movements of the different species in accordance with their logoi as intentions designating their purpose in God's total plan are different according to the differentiation Their

[4] On Gregory Palamas see John Meyendorff *St Gregory Palamas and Orthodox Spirituality* New York 1974

course goes toward the divine Unity especially when considered in a personal interpretation Thereby this contemplative activity of man when properly undertaken in a purified way reflects the unique creation of God in relation to the Logos the same [illegible] holds true The logoi as we have understood them are many but they the logoi may also be said to be one and only Logos although what we know of them and their variety does not exhaust what is contained in the Logos Thus there is no complete identity As differentiated the *logoi* never cease to be different from one another, [illegible] relationship with the Logos is a relationship with [illegible] source of unity At the same time the [illegible] the Logos to their [illegible] in accordance with the principle [illegible] created and incarnate inhabitation in the created world He encounters us in and through their [illegible] as the human and ours at the same time

Maximus uses biblical images to explain the mystery of [illegible] in the following one The logoi [illegible] are birds on the branches of the great tree of the [illegible] tree that has grown up from the mustard seed of [illegible] Christ speaks Likewise and now he uses another [illegible] of the logoi the logoi may be comprehended [illegible] as logoi of the Logos and the logoi of sensible things as [illegible] of the Logos through which man restations those [illegible] world [illegible] enter into spiritual communion with God[5] The logoi are thus not dentata with the essence of God nor with the empirical forms of existence of the things [illegible] created world

But this does not necessarily mean that they are divine energies in the sense that Gregory Palamas develops At this point F Ross has made an important remark He calls attention to the fact that the Orthodox theologian Vladimir Lossky interpreted the logoi in Maximus's theology simply as uncreated energies and that F Sherwood criticized him on this point accusing him of interpreting Maximus's statements [illegible] and [illegible] in a Dionysian and Palamite way But even more important F Ross also calls attention to a text in

[5] See Ambig 10 *Patr Gr* 1165 A, and Quaest ad Thal 55, 90, *Patr Gr*

Ambigua no. 22 where Maximus actually uses the expression energies about the logoi. What it means may of course be, and has been, debated (and I think that Maximus's understanding is indicative at least of a way Patristic ontology but also of a distinctive theology underlies his very dynamic conception of the logoi). I will quote the text without further comment, since it speaks for itself to a great extent.

> In the beginning naturally all the *logoi* that are in the beings [i.e. the totality of what is created] are the energies of the beings. For I say the truth knows numerous and infinite the differences of the divine energies. [Maximus considers the scriptural expression] "He has made all things in wisdom" [Ps. 103:24] and "Wisdom has built herself a house" [Prov. 9:1] and "Wisdom has hewn out seven pillars" [Prov. 9:1] and "Wisdom is the brightness of eternal light" [Wisd. 7:26] and "Wisdom is the breath of the power of God" [Wisd. 7:25] and "Wisdom is the artificer of all things" [Wisd. 7:21] and "Wisdom is the image of his goodness" [Wisd. 7:26] and "Wisdom is more beautiful than the sun and above all the order of the stars" [Wisd. 7:29] and in a word all the things which in a proper sense a divine energy suggests God [i.e. Scripture] to be, and to be said to be, and it will without being God, and without being a creature, [but] rather [as] the power which He is as Being . . .[8]

The logoi are thus, by nature, these qualities or acts of God which Scripture has appointed to term the *logoi*-energies. Obviously the created state and dynamic character attributed to these freedom-filled beings present in human beings as the whole of reality is different from and yet not being, divided and held together in Himself as Being.

Another great scriptural reference to be dealt with is what Maximus wants to express with his *logoi*/energies the

[8] Blum, *op. cit.*, p. 80

[8] Blum, *op. cit.*, p. 80

[8] PG 91, 1257 AB; the text is complicated and difficult to interpret, and my translation is [illegible]

same experiential and theological concern as that of Gregory Palamas. At this point Fr. Garrigues has expressed himself in a modulated way. The interplay of the two voices in the same harmony is, but their modes of expression is no different that Maximus articulates the Western doctrine of grace which Gregory would become the most typical representative of, but he does it [illegible]' as proponent, however, requires some further comment and correction.

According to Fr. Garrigues there were two possible philosophical approaches to the problem involved: a Platonic and an Aristotelian one. The Platonic attitude—or rather that of Neoplatonism—was received by Maximus and Gregory through Pseudo-Dionysius (though one of the Christian predecessors was also Evagrius). Aristotle, according to Garrigues, was the pioneer in formulating the point of a position like that of Gregory Palamas. But Evagrius was an Arian heretic of the fourth century, opposed by the Cappadocian fathers, he claimed that the very essence of God was accessible to human knowledge. Thus, what Garrigues also does not suggest that Gregory rejected the position of Evagrius in regard to Trinitarian theology but it was developed along the same lines. Both want to underscore the possibility of man to have access to God himself, and there is a similarity in their perspectives. The divine essence in itself [illegible] and that according to Gregory, [illegible] God can only be known as participation in his energies but that is not a real distinction as actually in human participation God one could not speak that is [illegible]

Now, Evagrius according to Garrigues [illegible] conceived of God in a certain sense on Aristotelian lines as the static I = I, a self-sufficient thought. The participation of man in the divine life must not affect God's very essence and yet it is a real participation through grace in the divine life. It is this reason that Gregory chooses a distinctive notion of God's essence. His essence and His uncreated energies [illegible] God [illegible] as the ground in Garrigues's argument. [illegible]

[illegible] Evagrius divine [illegible] Maximus [illegible] Gregory [illegible] 96

distinction threatens the unity of God. In order to safeguard His self-sufficiency or better His rest in Himself Gregory's assertion is to allow a real distinction of wills, but on his Platonic or Neoplatonic basis he can find no other way out than through his distinction between a risen Essence and an emanating Energy.

Carriques holds, however, that there could be another solution to the problem based on Aristotelian grounds. It is in the simple fact of Christ's existence that one should look for Christ's transcendence. That simple fact is not affected by the perfect actuality of the divine Being.[8]

As Maximus, Carriques argues, he inherited a Platonizing terminology throughout the different stages of his own theological development, particularly his notion of Origenistic *epektasis*, and as Monotheletism never covered that other territory of the Aristotelian approach, Carriques still sees room for his investigation of the known ways in which the energies of God as the only power of creation emerge. The great Greek Christian Maximus goes beyond the Neoplatonic concept of processive act and makes a valiant attempt to develop a doctrine of "the participation in the activity of creative Being in regard to created beings."[9]

But Carriques does more than this. He adds a discussion about Maximus's understanding of the unrestricted activity on the part of man, so that without a theandric synergism no divine action could be realized. He sees Maximus as adopting Carriques thus is once more an Aristotelian (and Western) one. Maximus professes a *communion of intention* between God and man which presupposes an energetic power on the part of God, understood in the way it is indicated, and on the part of man a *decision* of charity power to forge the causality of divine grace, impressing it upon the believer in virtue of the self-emptying (*kenosis*) of Christ.[10]

Here I must take a more critical attitude. I do not think that it is possible to find this specific doctrine of a *decision* of

[8] *Art. cit.*, p. 281.
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 287 f.

grace in Maximus, which Carriques is looking for and which would be supernaturally impressed upon the believer as true divine charity, even though Maximus does speak explicitly about grace and about divine charity operating in man, as well as an impact of Christ upon the Christian. In my opinion the synergism that Carriques tries to establish in Maximus is too artificial and too little dialectical, and where it goes the true communion of intention.

I do not pretend to have a final solution to the problem of energetic communion in Maximus. Yet I believe that the Chalcedonian model—here as always—is decisive for us. That is a model in which the Incarnation is not understood as a mere assumption (or even assumption) only but as a term that for the very assumption is a coming together of the two natures, the divine and the human, a hypostatic (or personal) union that is a unique, real one in which the natures come together but not as two and not as different kinds of any kind. Even when he speaks of participation through grace (of course) Maximus preserves the distinction always between created and uncreated energies, but he also speaks of a "*natural* energies" which in Christ are constantly as a divine concession for man in, and by which the human natures as image are to divine realities. I see precisely what grace means to Maximus, this kindness-decision on the part of God that lets the I be continually received and made related to human energies and human virtues. It is an abstract reflection on the archetype that these energies and virtues are divine but not in an ontological sense. However, in the same measure as one might comprehend what these realities are, the unpenetrable is rather a participation in the condescending divine energies than in the unpenetrable essence of God. The law of God's continual presence is not a law of assimilation or assumption, but of the under- and above-dialectic.

This personal conclusion brings us finally to the question of Maximus's eschatology (i.e., his understanding of the end of history and the fulfillment of all things).

ESCHATOLOGY AND MYSTICAL UNION

Most earlier modern studies on Maximus's theology [illegible] Norwood, J. H. Declerck, [illegible] whose studies [illegible] over a number of [illegible] Nevertheless, [illegible] Maximus's theology [illegible] and the [illegible] This is [illegible] a [illegible] has been discussed in [illegible] The reason is [illegible] attention [illegible] one reason of [illegible] Maximus's [illegible]

[illegible] And what are [illegible] perspective [illegible] [illegible] Maximus. Yet [illegible] transcendence [illegible] vision of Christian [illegible] Maximus does not [illegible] break between [illegible] and the after death.

[illegible] double a difference of [illegible] but [illegible] there is no question of a complete [illegible] would not have its starting point already here and now. Almost no direct [illegible] is found [illegible] on the other side of the iron curtain of [illegible] Thus, the eschatological dimension is almost [illegible] with [illegible] of divinization and with [illegible] of prayer's ascent.

[illegible] therefore, just a few compressed considerations [illegible] on Maximus's theology as a whole.

Maximus's attitude in regard to different theories of ecstasy [illegible] very important in this context for it shows [illegible] Among his predecessors we may recognize three [illegible] Two of them is the Evagrian one of [illegible] which the final aim of human life is raised [illegible] the knowledge of the Divine Trinity. According to the concept of a continual emptying of the [illegible] characteristic of a lover of Christ, where [illegible] sober drunkenness in God. For [illegible] the context of ecstasy that we find in Pseudo-Dionysius, where the [illegible] outside of itself due to a passive [illegible] the divine reality, a particular but also an everlasting [illegible]

Now we may conclude that the first type of ecstasy takes [illegible] and not outside of the natural capacity of human [illegible] The second one indicates an emigration outside [illegible] and of everything and thus it never ends as soul [illegible] continues to move into God forever. According to the third conception, it seems as if the soul nevertheless [illegible] a kind of self-emptying of its own actual character [illegible] What can be said of Maximus's position [illegible] of all of these types of ecstatic theology [illegible] he has learned much from them all.

[illegible] regard to the Evagrian one, he seems to be more [illegible] He states more forcefully [illegible] on the [illegible] between dimensions of rest and that of motion to [illegible] in the natural capacity of its own knowledge of the [illegible] reality. In regard to the Gregorian concept of [illegible] Maximus is aware of its philosophical consequences: we cannot identify eternal rest with a movement, [illegible] it implies a reinterpretation of both rest and movement. Yet, he is quite sympathetic toward the Gregorian paradox of divine presence and human distance at the same time. He however uses an expression like movement of the [illegible] and in dialectical interchange with his own precise descrip-

than a mystical union as a test of continual movement. Finally, in regard to the Ps.-Dionysian concept of ecstasy, Maximus modifies the idea of "suffering the Divine" in the sense that the latter always implies the idea of suffering to be moved. Maximus states that he who loves something suffers ecstasy in a way which is phenomenologically as loved.

This means that mystical ecstasy implies a real departure from oneself in order to enter into the movement of the divine eros. In the case of Ps. Dionysius the Areopagite this departure is radical, as creation is not brought into being by the grace of God. Yet, this does not mean that the human ethos simply disappears. On the contrary, the ecstasy of divine eros toward creation and the ecstasy of the human ethos demand that the latter be transformed so that it may bring its entire movement to its rest, to God Himself.

In this perspective we see two extremely important factors in the Christian understanding of the New Testament emphasis on the transfiguration of the human nature of God. Once more we see that Christ always serves as the model for the perception of Maximus. The deification takes place with the full respect for the created nature of the deified nature remains what it is, yet it is nevertheless united into an inseparable unity.

The following observation is of the same importance for this perspective. Maximus says that God

> makes Himself human for the sake of man through His own participation in the same substance as man, for this is the only way He can exist for God. man is entirely united to God in mind to the unknowable so far as God has manifested Himself through virtues, the God by nature invisible.[1]

Here we find demonstrated that reciprocity between God and man which remains the basis of all Maximian theology. For here there is a correspondence between the ecstasy of man

[1]Quaest. Ad Thal. 61, 1113 BC.

toward God and the manifestation, in him, of his proper nature in virtues. This manifestation is conceived as a kind of incarnation or embodiment of the logos and these virtues are seen as reflections of the divine attributes. As such they are manifestations of the ecstasy of God toward man (to use Ps. Dionysian terminology) and therefore they represent beyond any doubt the encouragement that is promised to man in mystical union. The natural desire of man in search for God, thus, finds its rest in Him through a process of interpenetration, which preserves both the gap between the natures and the fluidity of the divine and human but communicates simultaneously the modes of existence both as human virtues and as divine attributes.

This is then the eschatological dimension of Maximus's theology. It is certainly quite "existential" and modern in many ways but does it also have something to say to us about our own eschatological questions properly speaking? The speculation of a Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and of the modern so-called theologies of hope (J. Moltmann on the Protestant side and J. B. Metz on the Roman Catholic) have taught us that absolute reality (i.e. the reality of the cosmic Christ) does not necessarily have to be above us but could also be understood as being before us. But, we must ask is that particular (and very modern) perspective entirely absent from Maximus? I do not believe so. The movement (ecstasy about which he is speaking directs itself toward a final goal, and this goal is both here and beyond all natures. Because it is a goal it always appears to our desire to go beyond all natures in order to find, in God, the rest that is the absolute consummation of human life. This perspective is definitely universal (even in this context) not limited to cosmic, moral and ontological levels.

And what is even more important for Maximus, yet, of quite capital importance for him is this consolation or encouragement that through the vision that we achieve for ourselves through our practical efforts and our actual exercises assures us that we are on the right way although we have not yet reached the final goal. This consolation always awakens our natural aspirations, without letting us

believe at any moment that this final goal and union with God will be at all out of our efforts in themselves.

Deification is divinization is the final goal of man. Greater it could not be. And yet it is always a reminder of the fact of the incarnation because man's divinization remains a consequence of God's condescension in the incarnation of the Logos. Thus in Maximus's theology christological and anthropological categories go hand in hand in complete harmony and the basis of Maximus's concept of deification is the

[illegible] intersection of Christ's descent at every point in his ascension. Every version of it is in a sense a [illegible] In the Appendix we shall [illegible] Eucharistic presence in the [illegible] symbolic reality and connection that this implies.

APPENDIX

Symbol and Mystery in St Maximus

With particular reference to the doctrine of the eucharistic presence

In this and what chapter we shall illustrate a special aspect of what has been treated more systematically above. Its background is a contribution to the first international symposium on St Maximus which was held at Fribourg Switzerland at the end of September 1980. This contribution will make more concrete the originality of Maximus the Confessor.

The precise problem at stake is this: *To what extent is Maximus's conception of the eucharist a realistic or a purely symbolic one?* In trying to answer this question I propose that Maximus's understanding of the key terms *mystērion* and *symbolon* should be considered more closely.

The problem treated in this appendix has become more acutely relevant to me in recent years. Being myself involved in the present ecumenical dialogue between Roman Catholics and Lutherans, I have realized the importance of the basic agreement that exists today between Lutherans and Roman Catholics on *the real presence of the very body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the eucharist* and on the mode of that presence as directly linked to the elements of bread and wine and also the agreement on the fact that this realistic understanding is of basic importance for our notion of what

[illegible] in the communion of the believers. We may [illegible] [illegible] regard [illegible] Sacrament. [illegible]

[illegible] amount of *rapprochement* has been reached [illegible] [illegible] and it is thus of great importance [illegible] where the positions are in Eastern [illegible] than between, say, Luther[illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] figure of the East as St Maximus the Confessor. [illegible] in this respect represents a "realistic [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] the last statement, [illegible] Areopagite and Maximus are obviously part of such a [illegible] [illegible] anew within the context of Maximian theology.

BASIC ASPECTS OF THE PROBLEM

All Maximus scholars know that there is a basic problem in regard to Maximus's [illegible] on account of the scarcity of [illegible] texts. Although some scholars have regarded it possible to [illegible] a Maximian eucharistic doctrine (either [illegible] a positive result from the traditional point of view) [illegible] Maximus never [illegible] the Eucharist [illegible] sweeping allegorical character and [illegible] tration.

Against this fact it is [illegible] wood (a very accurate student of Maximus) is able to recognise no less than twelve texts dealing with the eucharist, of which six are supposed to deal with [illegible] munion. For my own part, I have [illegible] proper in its communion [illegible] character that a [illegible] be constructed on their basis.

[illegible] I will propose later an analysis of these texts, [illegible] may indicate some basic Maximian understanding of [illegible]

[illegible]

the eucharist (and one not necessarily identical with that of the Areopagite).

Another basic problem is that Maximus in his *Mystagogia* (which is supposed to be his commentary on the liturgy of the holy eucharist) leaves out a direct commentary on the *anaphora* itself. He indicates a reason for this in that he refers to the interpretation of the Areopagite in the latter's [illegible] which he does not want to repeat or compete with (although he actually does comment on [illegible] that the Areopagite also treats at length). Several [illegible] have not been content with this explanation; they [illegible] relevant but [illegible] the [illegible] and [illegible] to Maximus as a lay monk [illegible]. This is the case of [illegible] Alain Riou, while Hans Urs von Balthasar [illegible] Bornert discusses this possibility more openly. As a matter of fact such reluctance on behalf of a lay monk may also be supported by the position of the Areopagite.[8]

Whatever the reason may be, it is a fact that we have no explicit indications of how Maximus interprets the Holy Communion [illegible] the eucharistic presence. Of course one may argue that precisions at this point were not yet necessary and that therefore Maximus's situation was much [illegible] than that of the eighth century. On the other hand [illegible] in the theology of Maximus itself [illegible] a necessary position [illegible]. For my own part I think that Maximus has taken a position already and that, although he may not be explicit about it, he indicates [illegible] attitude to eucharistic communion. His actual definition of presence points, at least, to a respect for this moment of the liturgy (from consecration to communion), which [illegible] as being [illegible] another value and significance than all the other symbolic acts of the liturgy. But we shall return to this suggestion later, after having analyzed more in detail the few texts that we have.

[8]See A. Riou, *op. cit.*, p. 165, n. [illegible]; von Balthasar, *op. cit.*, p. [illegible]; and [illegible] R. Bornert, *Les Commentaires Byzantins de la Divine Liturgie du VIIe au XVe siècle* (Paris 1966), p. [illegible].

Two things have certainly favored those who rank Maximus among those of the "symbolistic" school of interpretation: (a) his reference to the Areopagite as an authoritative interpreter of the mystery of the eucharist, and (b) his own symbolistic interpretation of the parts of the liturgy that he comments upon. However, for a more precise understanding, we are bound to discuss both what the influence of the Areopagite really implies and the exact interpretation of the few passages where Maximus actually deals with the eucharistic presence and the character and implications of the communion. And it is quite clear—also from the delicate way in which Maximus both uses and modifies the work of his predecessors in other aspects of his theology—that only a minute analysis of what Maximus actually says will give sufficient evidence of his own exact position. As far as the eucharist is concerned, [illegible] has not yet been done. What I propose here, therefore, is only a beginning.

Some of the frames of reference for such an analysis, however, are obvious. One of these frames of reference is of course Maximus's theology of the incarnation of the Logos. Another is [illegible] to us through his understanding of the incarnation as being threefold, his idea of the three laws and the synthesis that they imply, since Christ as mediator holds it all together. Incarnation, understood in the terms of the Council of Chalcedon, [illegible] for man an access to divinity through the modes of this incarnation. Therefore the world, the Scriptures, and the Church together and in mutual relationship may be interpreted in anthropological terms, according to the *Mystagogia*. The whole world is subsumed under the Logos as differentiated in the *logoi* of things. All of Scripture is subsumed under the Logos as differentiated in the [illegible] of the divine economy. The whole of mankind, though differentiated socially and ontologically, and together with the rest of creation separated from the divine world, is subsumed under Christ as its head, who leads it on the way to perfection and deification.

Consequently, Maximus's understanding of the cosmos, since the liturgy necessarily takes place within the context of the cosmos, is of importance to our problem. More par

ary his understanding of Scripture and of the interpretation of Scripture is vital. There the function of images, types, and symbols and their relationship to salvation are at stake in a way that has to be parallel to that of the liturgy and the function of the sacraments. This parallelism, however, must be worked out precisely.

Finally there is the frame of reference that is represented by Maximus's understanding of spiritual development. To which stage of this development is the eucharist and participation in the eucharistic mysteries to be related? In other words, is the bodily and liturgical expression of the earlier and lower stages of the process of spiritual perfection of no further relevance to and does even the last stage and to what extent has communion even to do with deification?

Within these different levels of frames of reference in Maximus's theology we can easily see a number of questions appear in regard to the problem of the eucharistic presence and the importance of the eucharistic action. These observations at the same time indicate the basic structure of my presentation.

1. We started with a somewhat crude distinction between a symbolic and a realistic understanding of the eucharist. A preliminary question then would be *how Maximus' position has been judged by scholars until now.*

2. A second preliminary question, since Maximus obviously refers to and depends on *Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite*, is *how* the position of the latter in regard to our distinction *is to be evaluated.*

3. A third question relates to Maximus's *understanding of Scripture* seen in the perspective of his view of the Incarnation and in regard to the possible *parallelism* between man's access to the Logos through Scripture's revelation and his access to him through the eucharist. Since incarnational language is equally valid in relation to Scripture as in relation to the eucharist, and since a purely symbolistic interpretation of the latter seems to imply that the eucharistic symbols are equivalent to the symbolistic language of Scripture, this opens the question to what extent can similar distinctions be made in regard to different parts of Scripture as should be expected within the liturgy, e.g. between rites that come before the consecration on the one hand and the eucharistic sacrifice (as far as that is presupposed) and the eucharistic communion on the other. Maximus's general use of the terms *mysterion* and *symbolon* must be observed at this point.

4. A fourth question is closely related to that of the existence of a difference in Maximus between what we might call *gnostic communion* with the *Logos* through the interpretation of Scripture and the *sacramental communion* with Christ? And what is the implication of *experience* in this context?

5. We cannot come to a proper view of Maximus's understanding of eucharistic communion unless we analyze *the four texts* where he explicitly deals with it. Therefore, I suggest that such an analysis be made with a particular stress in the *terminology* used. Here again we must observe the terms *mysterion* and *symbolon* but certainly not only them.

6. In addition to this we should notice another problem. In regard to communion with the Logos through Scripture Maximus underlines (as a successor of the Alexandrian tradition etc.) the *analogy* that exists between what is received and the preparedness of the receiver. For a symbolistic understanding of the eucharist this idea of the idea of what is actually received the worthiness may be equally applicable to the eucharist. For a realistic understanding however again a distinction must be introduced namely between the full presence of Christ in the sacrament on the one hand and the personal receptivity of the communicant, on the other. Linked to this is the question how *the terminology of eucharistic transformation* is used by

Maximus is the aspect of sacramental efficacy or the aspect of receptivity predominant?

SYMBOLISM OR "REALISM" IN THE VIEW OF THE SCHOLARS

At the outset two extreme positions seem to be represented. On the one hand an old scholar like G. L. Prestige considers Maximus a clear representative of what he calls the Alexandrian symbolism even as the most fragrant blossom of that tradition.[1] On the other side W. Lampen recognizes the traditional elements in Maximus' thought without any appreciable reservations. The judgments of more recent writers have been more precisely phrased. Sherwood tends to side with Lampen in the sense that he both finds Maximus' theology explicit and states that we are permitted to say that for Maximus the eucharist is at the heart of the Christian life.[2] Völker finds not exactly symbolism.[3] Von Balthasar on the other hand, seems to incline to Stolz's view in that the conception of the altar as the Paschal mystery.[4] Later in a discussion of Maximus's letter about the matter he says that one must presume that Maximus was not in a position to regard what Christ had instituted as more than being only a symbolic phenomenon.[5] Völker regards the vacillating position of the scholars as due to the divergences of the textual witnesses and refrains from a definite position.[6]

A well worked out position I have only found in Bornert's discussion, starting first of all between two groups of texts, one indicating the symbolic character of the eucharist and one

[1] See G. L. Prestige, Die Abendmahlslehre des Maximus Confessor, *Jahrbuch für deutsche Theologie* 1 (1956) p. 38.

[2] See W. Lampen, "De Eucharistieleer van S. Maximus Confessor," *Studien Catholica* 9 (1933) pp. 33-52.

[3] See S. Maximus, *The Confessor, The Ascetic Life* p. 29 ff.

[4] See Völker, *op. cit.* p. 472, n. 2.

[5] See Von Balthasar, *op. cit.* p. 166.

[6] *Ibid.* p. 164 f.

[7] *Op. cit.* p. 472, n. 2.

which presents the eucharist as the sacrament of union with God and deification. Based on the latter and referring also to Maximus's more explicit statements about baptism, Bornert feels entitled to conclude that Maximus's development of eucharistic symbolism is not anti-realist. Reality and symbol as we are wont to say are mutually related. However Bornert also underlines that Maximus does not make the important distinction between "efficacious sacramental symbolism" and a purely representative liturgical symbolism where the former realizes what it signifies while the latter is a simple and non-effective portrayal.[7] However helpful these precisions are I should like to add already here that the qualifications purely in terms of reality seem to me to go beyond what Maximus would himself agree to. It is not only a lack of distinction on his part but perhaps a somewhat different view of the problem that prevents him from making that kind of precise distinction.

THE POSITION OF THE AREOPAGITE

Since the source material that explicitly expresses Maximus's understanding of the eucharist is so limited, his admitted dependence on the Areopagite necessarily attracts more attention than could his views supposedly coincide with those of the latter.[8] Detailed analyses by von Balthasar (especially in his study of the *Gnostic Centuries*) and by Völker (in regard to spiritual development) and others, have shown a considerable but qualified dependence on Pseudo-Dionysius in general. However one should not conclude from Maximus's reference to Ps. Dionysius in the *Mystagogia* that he has no opinion of his own. As to the lack of an explication of the Anaphora, the reason cannot possibly be simply the one that this had been treated by the Areopagite already, since he does comment on other moments of liturgy in spite of the fact that Ps. Dionysius had already done so.

However his reference to Ps. Dionysius must be taken seriously. It is only if differences can be demonstrated that

[8] Bornert, *op. cit.*, p. 137 f.

we also conclude that Maximus's opinion on the communion, for example as different from that of Ps Dionysius

But how then are we to characterize the Areopagite's own understanding of the eucharist? Any superficial glance at what is said in the *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* about the eucharist might lead one to suppose that here the perspective is almost totally that of heaven. This however is not in the slightest sense true of the eucharist as seen from the viewpoint of the Incarnation but is a serious distortion deriving from the neoplatonic framework that has been adopted. The various parts of the liturgy have all been assigned a symbolic meaning which may be determined by reference to the various stages in the ascent of the soul to God. The communion rite, for example, is seen as a symbol of the body and blood of Jesus Christ as our sacrifice and as the participation of the entire Church in the Eucharist. But all this is seen from the Areopagite's perspective of the soul's ascent to union with God. The communion as reception of the Lord's body and blood as sacrifice is a means of union with God the One [14]

In regard to the moment of communion certain elements are present which are also found in the Antiochene tradition. The Areopagite's perspective is, however, quite different. The moment of communion is seen as it were from above. It is the moment when the hierarch acts that is significant, not the presence of Christ or the actualization of it in the reception of communion as reception of it. The *Anamnesis* referred to seems to be of the Last Supper of Jesus and the mystical character of that meal is known in the way the gifts are distributed. The point of view is certainly that of the incarnation. But the Incarnation is seen as an act through which the one and simple divine nature of the Logos enters the complex and manifold sphere of the world. Therefore the communion rite is an *anamnesis* [15] in the fact that the gifts are transformed. Ps Dionysius himself says this explicitly: symbolic activity of the hierarch mediates the unity and thereby restores the most holy service. This certainly indicates the coming to us of the Lord, but its function

[14] *Eccl. Hier.* iii, p. 71.

is primarily demonstrative and only secondarily the communicating of a sacramental reality [16]

One could of course assert that such illumination for Ps Dionysius's sacraments and correct it so but this does not eliminate the fact that it is not the content of the eucharistic gifts that is of main importance to him but rather *the direction of the soul's movement in communion*. On the part of the communicants what is added is mostly a moral aspect implied, of course, in the fact that through the distribution the communicants are united among themselves. One is, therefore, inclined to agree with René Roques, an outstanding expert on Ps Dionysius, when he underlines that nothing reminds us of the body and blood of Christ and that the eucharistic communion for Ps Dionysius more relates us to God in His unity (though Trinitarian, of course) than to participation in Christ's humanity [17] But if this is the basic view of the Areopagite, we may at least ask ourselves when we come to Maximus's own texts how far he shares this view

COMMUNION THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES

It is Maximus's conviction that the Logos always and in all ways is to effect the mystery of His embodiment. Both the Origenist myth and the Dionysian vision were influential to the way in which he conceived this constant process of incarnation but his final and total understanding of it is certainly his own. Things belong together in Maximus's theocentric universe. The key to it is the doctrine of the hypostatic union, the binding formula of which is that of the Council of Chalcedon: it is the Logos becoming man in Jesus Christ (the third and final drama too) that is the model and paradigm of the whole process of incarnation. This process is certainly interpreted in that perspective and from that starting point. This fact however does not exclude a high degree of parallelism between the three basic incarnations in the logos of

[16] Cf. *De Ecc. Hier.* c. 3, *PG* 4, 444 AB.

[17] R. Roques, 'Autour de l'Ecclésiologie dionysienne', *Irénikon* 27, Prieuré-Dery, Paris 1954, p. 268.

[illegible] the *logoi* of Scripture, and the *logoi* in man. The [illegible] general has an double concept of providence and judgment [illegible] and shaped [illegible] heresies inherent in the [illegible] developed. Maximus is to demonstrate how the [illegible] of the cosmos and the economy of salvation belong [illegible] and how [illegible] perspective of [illegible] divine plan. [illegible] may be [illegible] and movement [illegible] expresses [illegible] and becoming [illegible] the world [illegible] God [illegible] and [illegible] of [illegible] and [illegible] as [illegible] **[illegible], thus is most clearly linked to the idea of the threefold Incarnation, and also to the three general laws of the world: the natural Law, the written law, and the law of grace.**

[illegible] Maximus [illegible] terminology could [illegible] Scripture uses the [illegible] and [illegible] there is a distinction [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible] and essence of scripture [illegible] perspective on the [illegible] Maximus [illegible] the [illegible] can be a perfect [illegible] of contemplation in the direction of God. On the other hand, there should be a different intensity. Let us very briefly illustrate this.

Part of a [illegible] statements by Maximus where communion terminology is actually used in regard to the first two stages of incarnation and by application not cited by Scripture I refer again to *Quaest. ad Thal.* 59, where the question is about the eating of the flesh and drinking the blood of the Logos who had a human body. Here Maximus says that when the Logos wanted to come into being he put down into the world the natural *logoi* of the conceptions of his divin-

[illegible] *Quaest. Ad Thal.* 59, 1205 C-1208 A.

[illegible] The distinction was then that the *logoi* of intelligible [illegible] should serve as his blood and the *logoi* of sensible [illegible] as his flesh. His unbroken bones, however, are *logoi* [illegible] concern the insight into divinity. To eat his flesh then [illegible] know the visible things, and to drink his blood is to [illegible] the invisible things.[18] In this eating, of course, the [illegible] of the scriptural revelation is also implied even [illegible] on the alternative interpretations of *Quaest.* [illegible] the whole process of spiritual development is [illegible] his flesh is interpreted as the blood as knowledge [illegible] the way) and bones as the mystical union [illegible] flesh and blood are also seen as the *logoi* of [illegible] and providence (the *oikonomia*), while the bones [illegible] hidden *logoi* of divinity.

[illegible] reference to communion terminology is found [illegible] although only indirectly, since the [illegible] law is the law of love is asked to eat the flesh [illegible] the blood of slaughtered animals. Here [illegible] other things the Christ as sacrifice is differ[illegible] the person blood together with the flesh. This is said [illegible] the relationship between the inner sense of the [illegible] elements (or Scripture) and the outward expression [illegible] prayer. Drinking the blood is to take the commandments [illegible] the mind and eating the flesh is to put them into [illegible] practice. We have here at the same time an indirect reference [illegible] the moment of becoming black and ugly. Through [illegible] sin of virtue the Logos becomes black. Through the [illegible] keeping of the commandments, he becomes as it were [illegible] more spiritual (through virtue and understanding [illegible] themselves are equally important).

[illegible] This now leads to a number of texts where the interaction [illegible] and dynamism is directly related to the way in [illegible] deals with Scripture. In *Quaest. ad Thal.* 60, Paradise [illegible] is explicitly exegeted. The *logos* that is hidden in the [illegible] commandments takes body in us, going down with us [illegible] and bringing us upward again through practice, [illegible] excavating us with we reach the highest of all the commandments.

[illegible] *Myst.* (Lage-Sherd) p. 339
[illegible] (Lage-Sherd) p. 43

mer is, that which says "The Lord, thy God, the Lord is one." A number of texts from the *Gnostic Centuries* could also be quoted[29] which pertains to the basic difference between a more visible [illegible] and a spiritual, imaginal understanding of them. Völker and others have presented us with [illegible] For our own purpose it may be sufficient here to refer to the passage of Chapter 6 which depicts Scripture as a house and does at least as a clear parallel to the [illegible] where the liturgy is celebrated. There are [illegible] which can be said to consist [illegible] The body is understood both as the [illegible] (where the New Testament is the rest) and as [illegible] Scripture as that which is hidden in a human body. We [illegible] a scope of what is [illegible] between letter as the [illegible] This shows clearly again the [illegible] of Maximus's vision. When [illegible] Scriptures [illegible] This is continued [illegible] as a parallel to this [illegible] Scripture [illegible] the stones of the building [illegible] (the [illegible] as supernatural revelation).

Scripture in Maximus's view is also here and to his understanding of Scripture there are, however, more details that are needed. However, some of the terminology [illegible] whether in Scripture there are indications of differences of degree.

As to [illegible] we can be very brief. Symbol (in Neoplatonism [illegible]) is a special perception. In most cases it may be replaced by other terms, like type or icon. Yet [illegible] type is [illegible] and [illegible] as used in the perspective of the economy of salvation. Type also has a [illegible] counterpart in [illegible] Other synonyms are also relevant, e.g. shadow (*skia*), riddle (*ainigma*) with their counterpart, "truth" (*aletheia*), and in a more general sense "plurality" with its absolute counterpart simplicity which, as

[illegible]

Völker[30] points out, as a sign that Maximus adopts the Dionysian perspective of the world. A special problem is represented by the term "*icon*," and this leads us on to the question of differences of degree. Bornert, who most helpfully tried to work out the parallelism of terminology and interpretation between Scripture and liturgy in Maximus in relation to the problem of symbolism—claims to have established a decisive difference between "icon" and "type" in Maximus's understanding of Scripture. Types are mostly found in the Old Testament, while the Gospel contains the "icon" of the true things (*symbolon* here being more an equivalent to "type"). In Maximus's interpretations of the rites of liturgy, however, "symbol" takes the place of "icon". There is the symbol that contains the mysteries of our salvation. Bornert presupposes that this shift is due to the influence of Ps. Dionysius's [illegible]. This observation may seem a little [illegible], but some of its implications must be discussed. We shall return later to the question of differences of degree.[31]

What particularly interests us here, however, is the relationship between *symbol* (with its synonyms) and *mystery*. The symbol is always to Maximus a vessel in which a truth is contained (and it can as such be seen as an expression of the salvific [illegible] of the Logos); a vessel the function of which is to become transparent to its content. The same truth remains, nevertheless, a "mystery". It is its character of *mysterion* (a divine truth that is not naturally available to man) that necessitates its symbolic representation. In order that a mystery be communicated it must be revealed. It is not enough that the Logos is hidden in the mysterious *logoi* of Scripture; the Logos Himself must actively work for this revelation. This happens through the economy of salvation. Therefore there is a difference of degree both between the second and the third of the three incarnations and between the Old Testament and the Gospel. In *Cap. Theol.* I, 46b Maximus expresses most wonderfully the activity of Christ as the one who, between the symbols and their mystery, just as the Apostles out of fear for the Jews sat behind doors that after

[illegible]

[31] See under R. Bornert, *op. cit.*, p. 111 f.

the dead or Christ but received the risen Lord in their midst [illegible] Lord's secret presence behind the doors of the senses [illegible] peace which is above all breath and He still does them not by showing them the symbols of His own mysteries.[1]

Christ Himself opens up the secrets of Scripture and its symbols [illegible] His mysteries and the [illegible] made effective not by the spiritual [illegible] Holy Spirit [illegible] Incarnation [illegible] and then also in [illegible] mysteries [illegible] reason Maximus [illegible] Christ's own type of His own acts [illegible]

[illegible] Maximus [illegible] Maximus uses [illegible] which [illegible] intended' [illegible] sense of [illegible] and that [illegible] Maximus indicates this [illegible] [illegible] mysteries [illegible] Christ [illegible] The [illegible] items of [illegible] [illegible] text depends [illegible] The Incarnation [illegible] mystery and therefore [illegible] Maximus [illegible] [illegible] and repeats [illegible] [illegible] the very center of Maximus's order [illegible] mysteries referring both to Scripture and liturgy.

[illegible] mystery [illegible] It is Christ the Lord Himself who through His historical Incarnation [illegible] and His [illegible] [illegible] the Church and the believers [illegible] the unity and between them and the saints effects that they serve as part of the divine economy [illegible] mysteries.

[illegible] then a [illegible] difference or degree as [illegible] elsewhere. It [illegible] there is according to Maximus an eco-

[illegible] B [illegible] 31 32 D

nomically historically based difference of degree, then this [illegible] affect the parallelism of the symbolism in Scripture and in the liturgy. As a matter of fact, it is not only logical that the difference between the preliminary type and the terminal icon, which Bornert claimed to have discovered in Maximus's scriptural understanding, should have a counterpart in his interpretation of the liturgy, but precisely that the Gospel proper (and particularly the words spoken by Jesus [illegible] before and after His resurrection) should have a [illegible] of quality in the *epiphanic* presence and the communion of the eucharist. I do not pretend to be able to prove [illegible] perfect parallelism in regard to the degrees of difference, but let us at least look at what is said about the difference in [illegible] Scripture, thus finding some of the attached problems [illegible] and then go on to a more rigorous and systematic [illegible] texts proper.

What Maximus distinguishes qualitatively within Scripture is already indicated in connection with the suggestions [illegible] but let us see now in a closer Maximus certainly [illegible] traditional distinctions between literal interpretations and those according to the deeper [illegible] He also distinguishes between different [illegible] letters and between our relationship to these [illegible] before and after the Incarnation. The Old Testament [illegible] considered equal with the Law and Maximus [illegible] that God became man in order to fulfil the Law [illegible] and thereby to destroy the dominance of the [illegible] On the background of this, the prophets of the Old Testament are of a higher significance than the law [illegible][2]

There is thus a basic difference between the Old and New Testaments (and the quality of the prophets depends on their [illegible] the truth of the New Testament (see above) but [illegible] does not prevent Maximus from regarding the [illegible] of the New Dispensation as being implicitly contained already in the Old. Neither is the Law as such disposed of. Even it [illegible] becoming void through the letters, it is renewed through

[illegible] Quaest. ad Thal. 59 (PG 90, 609 B-D).
[2] See also Ep. 19 (PG 91, 596 B).

grace.[57] It is thus impossible to absolutize the difference (obviously, precisely because the *logoi* of the commandments already contain the Logos). It remains a fact that the Law is only a shadow of the Gospel, while the latter is the very image (*eikon*) of the good things to come.[58] Therefore the shining clothes of the scene of the Transfiguration represent the [illegible] of the Gospels (which are [illegible]).[59]

What is [illegible] here is that [illegible] the Gospels and the [illegible] the New Testament as [illegible] [illegible] Incarnation of the Logos [illegible] [illegible] And [illegible] evident that the very fact [illegible] Maximus himself [illegible] [illegible] Scripture can be communicated.

GNOSIS AND SACRAMENTAL COMMUNION

As [illegible] question for [illegible] consideration I mentioned the [illegible] there is a difference in Maximus['s] understanding between [illegible] communion with the [illegible] the sacrament [illegible] [illegible] it seems as if to Maximus the [illegible] communion is only a part of the [illegible] possibility of communion. Since the *vita practica* [illegible] not just a stage to be passed [illegible] have been [illegible] [illegible] that sacramental communion with Christ means some [illegible] the whole of [illegible] as [illegible] would at least per-

[57] See *Cap. theol.* I, 89: *Patr. Gr.* 90, 1120 C.
[58] See *Cap. theol.* I, 90: *Patr. Gr.* 90, 1120 C; cf. *Amb.* [illegible] *Patr. Gr.* 91, [illegible] C-D.
[59] See *Cap. theol.* II, 14: *Patr. Gr.* 90, 1132 A.

tain to all the levels of man's composition. Further, there is also the aspect of experience (*peira*) to be understood. Experience, however, is an ambiguous phenomenon in Maximus's understanding. It is only through the experience of Christ that the experience of Christian believers gets a decisive positive importance: [illegible] as true experience is one of pure presence beyond all sensible affection.[60] Thus, when experience is prepared by Christ and communicated by Him [illegible] of the Christian life.[61]

Therefore the sacrament [illegible] *peira* cannot be [illegible] from [illegible] salvation [illegible] [illegible] one can never exclude the possibility that even the most sensible experience of the [illegible] may imply a connection with the more subtle dimensions of [illegible] progress. Maximus never, as we know, [illegible] the *vita practica* as being merely a preliminary stage [illegible] stages of spiritual perfection. A special study could quite well be devoted to the function [illegible] the [illegible] of man [illegible] present [illegible] senses, experience of Jesus Christ in regard to death and damnation, [illegible] the Christ [illegible] the new [illegible] experience of mystical union with [illegible] bring us back to the [illegible] Law and Gospel, etc.)

ANALYSIS OF THE KEY TEXTS

In order to get further in our understanding of Maximus's view of the eucharist, however, we must now come to the [illegible] analysis of those texts in Maximus's work that refer [illegible] to the eucharist as [illegible] aspect of [illegible] presence and communion.

[60] See *Quaest. ad Thal.* [illegible] *Patr. Gr.* 90, [illegible] A.
[61] [illegible] P. Miquel, [illegible] Maxime [illegible] dans l'œuvre de Maxime le Confesseur, *Studia Patristica* [illegible], pp. [illegible].

These texts are, to my understanding, not more than four. One of them is to be found in the [illegible] and [illegible] texts are [illegible] [illegible] cannot be [illegible] [illegible] already that the [illegible] through [illegible] of the [illegible]

[illegible] It is against the [illegible] Holy Communion [illegible] to be found in the Areopagite that this very short passage gets [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] and three at the same time). This indicates that to [illegible]

[illegible] stituted). It points to the fact that a certain multiplicity [illegible] the divine essence.

The text we have now discussed may of course be [illegible] by [illegible] of the remaining texts (from the [illegible] seems to confirm the tendency. They [illegible] the [illegible] communion with the [illegible]

[illegible] Patr. Gr. 90, 680 A.

A terminological study of these texts, together with the one just discussed, indicates certain very interesting coincidences [illegible] the discipline of silence which Maximus feels obliged to, implies that Maximus takes his starting point at the liturgical moment immediately preceding communion (the later moments are there indicated by the words [illegible] to come). Thus we must not hesitate to look [illegible] what he says about the whole content [illegible] what follows. Secondly, the elements of [illegible] are called "symbols" [illegible] and these [illegible] are directly related to what is communicated as *mysteria*.[illegible] In [illegible] the bread and the chalice are further called "representations" (*apeikonismata*) of the divine [illegible] and [illegible] the content of what is communicated [illegible] mysteries and arche-types.[illegible] Thus a [illegible] *between the symbolical representations and the mysteries themselves* [illegible]

[illegible] 21 Maximus affirms that the communication [illegible] of the mystery [illegible] itself and [illegible] take part properly as [illegible] by [illegible] and [illegible] similar to the good Cause, and that thus nothing is missing in the divine presence with them.[illegible] We can see already here [illegible] that eucharistic communion [illegible] Maximus [illegible] the [illegible] of spiritual [illegible] and [illegible] The terminology of eucharistic transformation [illegible] not used about the elements but [illegible] the [illegible] power of the [illegible] to Ps. Dionysius was taken in the [illegible] Maximus [illegible] the receiving part and to [illegible] The presence [illegible] is further [illegible] is a presence that needs not be further [illegible] communicated in the [illegible] deification.

[illegible] further developed in the other texts of the [illegible] in Chapter 24, Maximus describes the [illegible]

[illegible] Patr. Gr. 90, [illegible] A, the elements of the eucharist are [illegible] 703 A.
[illegible]
[illegible] 704 D and 705 A.
[illegible] 693 A.

...mor the participation in the mysteries, as having the power to effect the fellowship (*koinonia*) and destiny ...attributes that restored human the likeness (*homoiotes*) ...God a likeness through which man is made worthy to become God.[47] This is to say that Maximus here interprets the eucharist ...makes men if they take part in it worthy to receive ...the presence which can receive ...place ...this presence is ...different from what we ...think it is. Does ...eucharist ...of only a demonic ...whatever ...effect ...the cause of ...effect is even ...of ...chapter ...that it is ...there ...to us the ...of ...*archetype* ...presence." ...

...Maximus ...demonstrates the ...thought which ...as we know from Maximus' ...relationship ...and likeness (*homoiotes*) and deification (*theosis*) through ...we can ...Maximus. ...thought ...the images of ...of ...and ...to develop a true theology ...eucharist ...deification (the ...

[47] *Myst.* PG 91, 664 D.
[48] *Ibid.* 665 A.
[49] *Ibid.* 709 C.

THE QUESTION OF THE WORTHY RECEIVER

Thus, we have only one of the questions left out of those that were indicated before: to what extent is Maximus's understanding of eucharistic communion in the *principle of analogy* implied, so that what is given is measured after the capacity of the receiver to receive. My presupposition is that according to a "realistic" understanding of the eucharist a distinction must be made between an objective and a subjective ...between the objective presence of the realities of Christ in the eucharistic elements and the subjectively determined mode of reception of the receiver. In a "symbolistic" understanding this problem presents itself otherwise. From the texts of Maximus we have analyzed it seems clear that the principle of analogy is involved.

Now, the formula of this principle in Maximus is the famous *tantum-quantum* formula, which found its most expressive representation in *Amb.* 10. There it is clearly based on the distinctive presupposition of Maximus that God and man are exemplars (*paradeigmata*) of one another. This ...is ...the dependence of man's deification on the ...tion of the ...aspect ...but ...that the degree of ...fashionment *in* man is decisive for the degree of deification *of* man.[48] What Maximus speaks about in the *Mystagogia* as a decisive likeness (*homoiotes*) but ...character of this likeness is not quite clear. Is ...a salutary likeness to us, inherent in the holy forms of the sacrament, or is it a produced likeness in man which makes him receptive to the divine gifts of the sacrament? In *Myst.* 2 Maximus clearly talks about a divine sharing (the transforming likeness ...receives in itself (the likeness unto the) and through ...and participation grows those who worthily take part in it ...to the Good Cause as the character ...that ...witnesses is not precisely defined. In *Myst.* 24, it is ...that ...and identity are received *through* the ...without further consideration of where this likeness is

[48] *Myst.* PG 91, 1113 BC.

But in the epilogue of the *Mystagogia* the central text says that the participation (communion) makes clear our consecration and affinity as well as our divine likeness and deification because of the goodness of God. In a passage of great importance the forthcoming communion seems to be referred to as the reception by grace into sonship through similarity. Thus I feel entitled to conclude that the *likeness* which is referred to here is in the first place that of the sacrament to the divine reality and secondarily that of the receiver to the sacrament as it is received. It adds to this degree of receptiveness. It is correct what Maximus wants to say as that *the incarnational scheme of the sacrament receives the reception of the communicant, and of his transformation into the image of human as man.*[45]

The famous distinction of the Areopagite in the *Coel. Hierar.* II between similar and dissimilar "symbols" might have had an influence on Maximus at this point but then one would be back between verbal and scriptural symbols and those of the sacrament. One has to say that the scriptural symbols in the Scriptures can be more plentiful since they remind us of the not comprehensible by mind nevertheless (and that is Maximus's own emphasis) the real human community of the symbols. Eucharistic presence and communion are effective in establishing the unity of man with God which is the realization of his character as *imago Dei*. Thus, *through communion man* who worthily demonstrates by virtuous preparation his receptiveness, *receives by grace from the sacrament into that sphere of human personal development where deification is realized.*[46]

If my contention is correct Maximus wants to say that eucharistic communion through being in the perfect likeness with the Logos made man effects in man properly prepared the likeness of man with God that goes beyond his natural qualities and deifies him according to the *tantum quantum* principle. But here also the perspective of Maximus is other than that of the Areopagite. If the latter is primarily interested in the reflecting quality of symbols, Maximus insists on

[45] *Myst.* Ge 9, 701 B.
[46] See *Myst.* Ge 5, 140 C–141 A.

an *incarnational* perspective where the elevation of man is the direct fruit of the descent of the Logos, of his becoming man in successive stages of the economy of divine salvation.

Maximus deals in his *Mystagogia* first of all with the effect of the eucharistic communion, i.e. with the subjective and receiving side of it (possibly on account of his position as a layman). He presupposes also an objective and effective side of Christ's own action (of established similarity with our human reality of the incarnate Logos) as the necessary cause of the fruits of communion. In regard to that side he keeps the discipline of silence. Maximus has decidedly indicates a proper theology of the eucharist and it does not at all necessarily coincide with that of the Areopagite as it depends on the latter's way of presentation.

This is clearly in accord with his own incarnational vision where the movements of descent and ascent are in a constant relationship. The Origenist monism and a Neoplatonically modified Neoplatonism are ruled by transcendent criteria as to be demonstrated what his other authority, the mysterious "Old Man" (probably Sophronius) in fact contributed to his eucharistic theology.

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